

THE  
ORANGE GIRL.

*An entirely Original Drama,*

IN A PROLOGUE AND THREE ACTS.

BY  
HENRY LESLIE & NICHOLAS ROWE.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
THEATRICAL PUBLISHER,  
LONDON.



CHARLES GARJNER ... Mr. SANDERS. JOE KANDAELL ... (a Ticket-of-Leave Man) ... Mr. BUTLER.  
 STEVEY POLEWHEEL ... Mr. PEARCE.  
 COLONEL ALFORD (*Governor of Portland Island*) Mr. E. GREEN. FALKNER (*a Warder*) Mr. H. WALTON.  
 Mr. MONTAGUE RAWKINS, Q.C. ... Mr. VIVIAN. TOM TAPPELL (*a Policeman*) Mr. ALBROOK.  
 CLUTTON and MIDDLEDITCH ... (Travellers) ... Mr. PRICHARD and Mr. DANBY.  
 JANE FRYER ... Miss GEORGINA PAURCEFORT.  
 JENNY ... Miss JENNY WILLMORE.  
 Mrs. GREGORY DYNGELL Miss ELIZABETH WENSTER. Mrs. DOROTHY MAKEPEACE Miss LARGLEY.  
 Carol Singers, Mammers, Tenantry, Convicts, &c., by the Ladies of the Corps de Ballet, a Choral Body specially engaged, and a numerous Staff of Auxiliaries.

THE ORANGE GIRL.

Programme of Scenery and Incidents.

SCENE--DEVONSHIRE AND ITS VICINITY.

PROLOGUE - - - - - FADING TO DEATH.

"Leaves have their time to fall,  
 And Flowers to wither at the North wind's breath,  
 Thou hast, all seasons for thine own, O DEATH!" —  
*Mrs. Hemans.*

THE HOME OF THE ORANGE GIRL IN SHEEWINS BENTS, LONDON.

*A lapse of Seven Years is supposed to occur between the termination of the Prologue and the commencement of the Drama.*

ACT I. - - - - - THE EVE OF A SAD NEW YEAR.

"Tis the death night of the solemn old year,  
 And it calleth from its shroud,  
 With a hollow voice and loud,  
 But serene,  
 And it saith, 'What have I given  
 That hath brought thee nearer Heaven?  
 Standest thou beside my hearse  
 With a blessing or a curse?  
 Is it well for thee, or worse,  
 That I have been?' — Bayard, 1801"

SCENE I.—COTTAGE OF JOHN FRYER AT ASHBURTON, DEVON.

SCENE 3.—**West Wing of Beamish Grange—Night.**

## SC. 3.—THE LOGAN STONE AND FROZEN POOL

IN THE DRUID VALLEY OF DEAN BURN.

ACT II. — “THE SPORTS OF MERRIE ENGLANDE.”

“Bring me a garland of holly,  
Rosemary, ivy, and bay,”

Gravity's nothing but folly,  
On the night of a New Year's Day.”

SCENE 1.—*Cottage of John Fryer (as before).*

SCENE 2.—THE ROAD TO THE MIGHTY CITY.

SCENE 3.—THE OLD HALL IN BEAMISH GRANGE.

PREPARED FOR THE

## COUNTRY CAROLS—OLD ENGLISH DANCE,

*And Welcoming Revels to the Opening Year.*

A LAPSE OF TWELVE MONTHS BETWEEN THE SECOND AND THIRD ACTS.

ACT III.

THE WORKERS IN THE CHAINS.

“Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage,”

Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for a hermitage.”—*Lovelace.*

SCENE 1.—**Exterior of the Guildhall in the City of Exeter.**

SCENE 2.—HIGH STREET, WEYMOUTH.

SCENE 3.—**CONVICT SETTLEMENT IN THE ISLE OF PORTLAND.**

[This Drama is unreserved.]

THE  
ORANGE GIRL.

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PROLOGUE.— FADING TO DEATH.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Garret, meanly furnished. The scene narrows somewhat to a large window at the back, concealed by check curtains; a bed, R., with end to floats; on the table, L. C, there are a couple of medicine bottles, and a candle going out; a Dutch clock on the wall points to the hour of a quarter to twelve.*

SALLY DYNCELL *is at the window, closing the curtains, as though to shut out the noise of a Bacchanalian chorus, which is indistinctly heard as though in the streets below—Stage half dark.*

*Chorus, sung in hilarious fashion.*  
What were the world deprived of wine,  
Glorious wine—all-potent wine—  
To make life's troubles pass.  
Then let us comrades deeply drink,  
Nor idly pause to muse or think,  
But toast our favourite lass.  
So while we live, we'll drink, we'll drink,  
Ne'er think, but drink—yes drink, ne'er think:  
And when one dies,  
His soul shall rise,  
Like the bubbles in our glass.

SALLY. *Bother their noise, they've disturbed her; I know they have, and I'm not half such a nurse as Jane. I wish she'd come back—it's getting near the time to give her sister the draught, (goes to table, taking up the flickering candle, and holding it up to the clock) Near twelve o'clock, (candle goes out) Bother the candle ; and where the lucifers are, and where Jane keeps her dips, I'm hanged if I know. (SALLY goes feeling for the cupboard)*

ELLIE. (*in the bed*) Tell me, whoever you are, have I, in my slumberous dreaming—have I mentioned a name ?

(*SALLY has found the candle and matches, and during this speech and the following sets it up and lights it*)

SALLY. You have spoken nothing—said nothing.

ELLIE. Nothing—thank heaven!—nothing! (*pause*)

SALLY. Poor thing! 'pon my word I don't feel at all comfortable, not at all. I can't somehow bear to be alone. If she wasn't Jane's sister, and Jane so good, so honest, and so true ! and she'd asked me to stay while she'd gone for the doctor! I—stop—I fancy I hear her step upon the stairs, (*going to the door, L., and opening it*) Yes ! thank Heaven, here she is !

*Enter JANE GRIERSON, L.*

JANE. The doctor says he'll come directly—has she moved ?

SALLY. And spoken—yes! (*opens curtain*) But spite of herself, Jane, she sleeps once more.

JANE. (*taking the candle and looking in the bed*) She's very lovely, isn't she ? She was the darling flower of our flock, Sarah ! I look at her and feel that I could cry—I look at her once more, and a curse, Sarah, rises to my lip—

SALLY. A curse, Jane!

JANE. Upon the wretch who betrayed her—the wretch who found the bud just blossoming into graceful beauty, blasted it with his poison breath, then suffered it to fall unheeded on the cruel ground. Take the candle, Sarah, the light disturbs her. (*SARAH takes the candle as JANE closes the curtain of the bed*)

ELLIE. (*muttering*) Never his name!

JANE. How, at the very gate of death, her soul clings to her destroyer.

ELLIE. Jane!

JANE. Darling—the medicine! (*to SALLY, who pours it out, and gives it to JANE*)

ELLIE. Too late; let me slumber once more, till slumber subsides unto death.

JANE. For my sake, the sake of the sister who found you so desolate—Ellie! Ellie!

ELLIE. For your sake, yes !

(*a bare arm is seen between the curtains taking the glass from JANE and returning it empty—as JANE takes the glass she kisses the hand—pause*)

JANE. Once more sleep; see, I've brought some lemons, Sally.

SALLY. I understand, some lemonade, yes. (*SALLY begins to cut the lemons and make some lemonade in jug, placing it on the hob, &c.*)

JOHN. (*at the door, softly*) Jenny, Jenny!

SALLY. (*aside*) Why that's John, your sweetheart John.

JANE. Mine! If I believed anybody thought such a thing—a ne'er-do-well—

SALLY. Well, there don't make a fuss about it; I know well enough you like him better than Uriah, and you know well enough he's fond of you!

JANE. He's after no good, I'm sure—up at this hour!

JOHN. Jenny, Jenny! may I come in? (*peeping*) Look here, I've brought that sister o' yours a trifle o' jelly; I saw the fellows hard at work at the cellar, so I knocked 'em up and bought it for you. It's rare and strengthening, I can tell you.

JANE. It must have cost a deal! still I thank ye, John, I thank ye.

JOHN. I could buy ye a whole ton of it, only to hear ye say "Thank ye," so calm and pretty; for I do love you, Jenny, and that's the fact.

JANE. Well, if you do, John, you needn't say so before strangers.

SALLY. Bless you, I don't see a morsel, I don't. I am as blind as a bat; and if you want to give her a smack, I can be as deaf as a milestone, (*laughing at the back*)

JANE. (*pointing to bed*) Hush!

JOHN. I can't help telling you, Jane: I've got such news—jolly news. Uriah Underwood, your old sweetheart—well he was (and I believe you like him better than you do me, after all)—but never mind that—lie's brought me a job o' work, that will pull me in fifty pounds in less than a fortnight. What do you say to that?

JANE. Uriah—hush!

JOHN. You don't seem to believe. But it's true, I tell ye. Fifty pound! and they're coming here. I expect 'em every minute.

JANE. Them! Who?

JOHN. Why, Uriah! and his friend who gave me the job.

JANE. Uriah! Fifty pounds? (*JOHN cautions her, pointing to ELLIE*)

ELLIE. (*singing feebly*)

Gin a body meet a body  
Coming through the rye,  
Gin a body kiss a body,  
Should a body cry?

JANE. (*bursting into tears*) The song! the old song of home. The song she used to sing when she left to meet her betrayer!

JOHN. (*tenderly approaching her*) Come Jane, dear Jane! don't be downhearted! Come, lass, come!

ELLIE. (*screaming loudly*) Jane! Jane!

JANE. Loving sister ! darling sister! Here by your side!

ELLIE. I haven't mentioned his name ?

JANE. No, Ellie! Nor do I wish to hear it or to know it in any way!

JOHN. (*bell rings softly twice*) It's the-----

JANE. Who ?

JOHN. Uriah and-----

JANE. And not the doctor ?

SARAH. I'll go and hurry him.

JANE. Quick, Sarah, quick, (*giving her her bonnet and shawl*) And tell him it's life and death ! (*as she is hurrying SARAH off, who exits door L., JOHN follows*) No, you stop, you stop; my poor brain is in a whirl. What were you saying ? Fifty pounds! Uriah ! What was it ?

JOHN. Afterwards—I haven't time now—afterwards !

JANE. Now, John—afterwards may be too late.

JOHN. Well, you know, I'm a bit of everything; but most of all, an engraver: and in his way, there ain't a workman in London to touch John Fryer, though John Fryer's the man to say it. It's a foreign lottery ticket; and see, I'm so proud of my work, I've put my name at the back of the plate.

JANE. But engravers don't earn fifty pounds in two weeks, John.

JOHN. There, that's the way with you women ; you want to get at the bottom of everything, (*bell rings twice*) There they are, ringing again. Why couldn't Sarah let them in?

JANE. John ! (*JOHN is going quietly off*)

JOHN. (*suddenly stopping*) Well.

JANE. Let me look at this, (*taking the plate and proof out of his hand*) Let me look at it. (*going up to candle on table*)

JOHN. It isn't quite finished; but I shall draw something on account. It's a lottery ticket—a foreign lottery ticket: least that's what Uriah said.

JANE. Uriah! This is no lottery ticket, John Fryer ! You may shut your eyes to it, close your very heart to it; but you know, as I know, that is no lottery ticket. This is a forged bank-note.

JOHN. (*starting up, and confronting her*) Jane !

JANE. John! (*picture*)

JOHN. (*sullenly*) That thought came across me not an hour since. But what if it is ?

JANE. What if it is? Oh, John Fryer—John Fryer, that your lips should ever speak such words.

JOHN. Uriah told me it was a lottery ticket. The words are all foreign. I ain't learned, and how am I to know that it isn't. And it brings in fifty pounds beside.

JANE. You take my breath away, (*the bell rings twice, rather louder*) No, you shan't go. I'll cling to ye till soul parts from body ; but you shan't go. Think, John, think and remember.

JOHN. Well, there then, I have thought; and as for memory, what have I got pleasant to remember ? My father died wild with his drinking, and what's been my heritage ? Want in the squalid court—want in the wide-paved street! Mother, the only soul on earth that ever looked on me with unselfish love, perished for the help of a crust that a rich man might have cast to his dog. The world made me the shoeless vagabond I am; so what do I owe it that I should be so blessed particular, eh ? When I think on it, it makes me mad, then I take to the drink, and forget it.

JANE. Then think of me. I'm only an orange girl. At all hours, in the chill wind, in the pitiless rain, through the busy unheeding town, oh, hard is the bread that I earn, yet how precious it tastes to my lip, for labour has sweetened the crust, John, and honesty blesses the meal.

JOHN. I tell ye, Jane, this horrible curse of poverty I can't stagger under longer. When I hear you from my room above there open your creaking door and go out in the black morning of winter, and remember that these fifty pounds that I can earn so easy would make a woman of the girl I love-----

JANE. Don't, John, don't. If you poured them all fresh and glittering in my lap I would not change for them that inward peace which innocence alone can bring.

JOHN. Why do you talk to me in this way? What's the good?

JANE. To win you out of the depths—you, whose heart is so good, whose hand is so ready, whose brain is so clever, to make you-----

JOHN. Your husband, Jane!

JANE. Well, John!

ELLIE. (*feebly*) Promise her! My only sin was a concealment ; and, mercy of dear heaven, how I have suffered, how I have suffered!

JANE. Think—an angel speaks.

JOHN. I can't tell 'em.

JANE. (*fetching pen and ink from back*) Then write to them. Where's a bit o' paper?

JOHN. (*hesitatingly*) Why here's the very letter Uriah's friend sent me. See, he says he'll give me twenty pounds to-night, the rest when it's finished.

JANE. Write on the back of it—" Not being sure that all's quite right, I return the plate and decline the fifty pounds."

JOHN. Remember your promise, (*writing at table*) Donkey that I am—

JANE. (*kissing him*) No, no; it's good seed you're sowing, John; the fruit will show itself in Heaven's good time.

ELLIE. (*screaming*) Jane—sister—Jane !

JANE. (*rushing to her*) Ellie!

ELLIE. It's coming. The Angel of Death—

JANE. Oh, John, she's changing—my sister—my sister—my darling, lost sister. The Doctor.

*Enter SALLY, door L.*

SALLY. (*calling*) Here, Jane, he's here, (*the DOCTOR enters L., crossing to the bed*) There's Uriah and another man downstairs wanting John Fryer.

JANE. (*hurriedly snatching up the letter which JOHN has written and the plate*) Give them that—quick.

*Exit SARAH, L.*

DOCTOR. Is this your sister ? (*JANE assents*) For the doctor it is too late: you should have sent for the divine. (*aside to her*)

JANE. Is it so near ?

DOCTOR. (*by the side of the bed*) At the hour! (*shewing his watch*)

ELLIE. (*rising and leaning over him*) And it wants only three minutes. Yet, why is it that I hear sharper, see clearer, while the world is fading away ?

JANE. Oh, Ellie—flower of our flock—Ellie!

ELLIE. Don't speak, Jane, but listen—only listen. Ask every one to be very, very quiet, Jane, my voice is so feeble. How long is it since I left our home?

JANE. Seven years.

ELLIE. And two months. I've counted the time day by day, and it's seven years and two months ; and you'd seen nothing of me—heard nothing of me—till this night, when you found me dying in the streets.

JANE. This night.

ELLIE. (*sinking back*) And all those seven years you had heard nothing—seen nothing—of your sister or her husband?

JANE. Your husband! Was he your husband ! Oh, darling, wronged Ellie, was he your husband ?

*Pause.—ELLIE extends her hand with something in it. JANE motions to JOHN, who brings the candle from the table.*

JANE. (*reading a pawn ticket*) And you parted with even your wedding ring ?

ELLIE. For her sake—the sake of my fatherless child.

JANE. Your child?

ELLIE. Named after you, Jane,—at school at Hampton. I've starved to keep her there.

JANE. The name—the father's name?

ELLIE. Never his name; I swore to him never to reveal it, and 'tis a debt which I owe to the dead.

JANE. For the sake of the child ?

ELLIE. Must she suffer? His spirit would forgive me, when for her sake—nearer, come nearer—your ear, Jane, your ear.

URIAH. (*outside*) It must be some mistake; I'll speak to him.

URIAH'S FRIEND. (*afterwards* BEAMISH) Fellow must be an idiot! He's in here, I suppose. He's had money on account—he shall give it back, or-----

JOHN. (*whispering*) Oh, Jane—Uriah !

JANE. Hush! hush!

ELLIE. Her dead father left me to a brother's care, and Ire—Heaven forgive him—has forsook me, to starve and die.

*Enter* URIAH'S FRIEND *in a loose wrapper, with the letter in his hand.*

FRIEND. Hark ye, sir! (*going up to* JOHN—SARAH *comes down, L., between him and the door*) you refuse my work, yet take my money. Finish it, or-----

(*directly she hears his voice, ELLIE starts out of bed and rushes to him—she is in street costume*)

ELLIE. It is he, the wretch who left me to perish. Stay him!

FRIEND. (*thrusting the letter into the pocket of his wrapper*) She—Ellie—here!

ELLIE. Stay him. (FRIEND *swiftly passes* SARAH, *who to detain him holds his coat, which he leaves in her hands as he passes out—ELLIE stands transfixed, c.*)

ELLIE. My soul to heaven—my child to a sister's care. (*falls*)

JANE. (*to* DOCTOR) Oh, sir, is this fainting ?

JOHN. Not fainting. This is death !

TABLEAU AND END OF PROLOGUE.

~~~~~  
A Lapse of Seven Years.  
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ACT I.—THE EVE OF A SAD NEW YEAR.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Cottage Interior (set) at Ashburton. The table is laid for supper near a blazing fire, L. 3 E.*

MRS. FRYER *is sitting at the window, L. flat, through which the ground is seen covered with snow—JENNY is at a smaller table working—(he clock points to eight minutes past ten o'clock—staircase, R.—door, R. in flat, and door L. in flat.*

JENNY. Aunt, do you see the hour?

MRS. F. Yes, Jenny; it's ten o'clock.

JENNY. And uncle not yet returned ! (*pause*) Heiglio !

MRS. F. You sigh, while I seem so happy, and long for the next day of another year to be spent as the last, in the village where I was born, in the very house in which my childish steps were reared, and, with a husband so true, so clever, and so honest-----

JENNY. I should be as happy as you, dear aunt, if-----

MRS. P. If—go on, Jenny—if——

JENNY. If I could only know my father's name. You've not seen Mr. Underwood—why do you turn away ?

MRS. F. Because his name is the only blight on this blossoming year. I wish he had never come as steward at the Grange.

JENNY. But you know he says-----

MRS. F. That he has a clue to your father's name. But I scarce believe it, Jenny, (*knock at door—JENNY runs to open it*)

*Enter* MRS. GREGORY DYNGELL, *door in flat.*

MRS. D. Don't be frightened, Jane, it's only me! You haven't seen Dyngell anywhere have you ?

MRS. F. No, I havent; why, Sally, you're drenched to the bone!

MRS. D. Haven't got a dry rag on me; and I am in that worry about Dyngell. He sends a message—"I've met with an accident," he says; "I can't come home," he says, "but I'll meet you at Fryer's," he says. He makes such a deuced mess (excuse the bad language) of everything he touches. If he was only like your John.

MRS. F. John is a good husband.

MRS. D. And such a clever man, turns his hand to anything. To think now of you and he going regularly on the tramp, and for him just to pop into the dye-works here at Ashburton as quite a labourer—now he's foreman; and he gets four pounds a week, doesn't he, Mrs. Fryer?

MRS. F. Well, it isn't much short.

MRS. D. I've just passed your old flame, Uriah Underwood—he's coming here, I think.

MRS. F. Coming here ! But you mustn't stand talking in all your wet things. Come up stairs with me and Jenny, and I'll lend you a change ; as for Gregory-----

MRS. D. *Mr.* Dyngell—even from you, *Mr.* Dyngell. Dyngell may be lazy, but *Mr.* Dyngell's a gentleman, and mustn't be called out of his name.

*Exit* JENNY, MRS. FRYER *and* MRS. DYNGELL, R.

*Enter* URIAH UNDERWOOD, *door in flat—he steals in, looks rapidly round, and sinks into a seat by the door.*

URIAH. " Out of my sight, beggar!" Those were Sir

Peregrine's words. " Out of my sight! He's set my brain a-fire—I—I almost choke. "Out of my sight, beggar!" to me—to me, who, in his long years of disinheritance and poverty have served him : kept his vile secrets, and now wealth smiles on him—"Out of my sight, beggar!" that's my reward.

*Enter* MRS. FRYER, R.

MRS. F. My slippers are here, (*as she looks for them she sees* URIAH) Mr. Underwood !

URIAH. (*half sullenly*) Jane.

MRS. F. Jane—I have a husband, Mr. Underwood.

URIAH. I beg your pardon. I fancied, perhaps, it was time long past, when you were only an orange girl, and-----

MRS. F. Never, even in those times, did I in thought, word or deed, give you a title to address me with such familiarity.

(*crossing*)

URIAH. (*staying her*) Stay, Jane—for call you Jane I will—perhaps I only dreamed it, though, unlike most dreams, the pang I suffered was bequeathed from the silent night to the busy day.

MRS. F. (*releasing herself*) You have been welcome here, Mr. Underwood, because you tell me you possess the knowledge of a clue to the father's name of my dead sister's child, but-----

URIAH. Not yet—you must not stir yet! I've known you longer than John Fryer, and loved you as truly—that is the word, loved.

MRS. F. And you dare speak thus to me, and here ?

URIAH. Be calm; do not despise, but pity me. *I* he thought is dear to me, Jane, because it brings to me oblivion of the artifice of my soul! that spark of love, guilty though it may be, is the one touch of nature, Jane, which makes me common with my kind.

MRS. F. Go, Uriah, this is my home; false friend, base servant to a wicked master. Go, Uriah, go!

URIAH. I am going; Sir Peregrine and I have quarrelled: by dawn to-morrow miles will be between us. Say, Jane, at least say you do not hate me.

MRS. F. (*casting him off*) Hate you ! In the whole vocabulary of words there is not one in which I can condense my scorn for the wretch who could pour a word of love into the ears of a wife beneath the roof her husband keeps to shelter and protect her.

*Exit, L. 1 E.*

URIAH. Hate for hate, proud Jane, and revenge is beneath my hand; revenge at once on the woman who has derided me and the master who has spurned me. Only a child-----

*Enter JENNY, down staircase, R.*

JENNY. (*softly*) Mr. Underwood-----

URIAH. And the child is here.

JENNY. Mr. Underwood.

URIAH. Ah! my pet among the pets. If it was only an hour later, my little darling, I should wish you a happy new year.

JENNY. Oh! Mr. Underwood, would you only tell me my father's name!

URIAH. Come—come here—close ; so that no whisper may pierce the wall. See, now. What were you saying, eh !

JENNY. That if you have any suspicion of the secret of my birth, or any thought, however remote, I pray of you tell me, Mr. Underwood!

URIAH. Eh? hem! but how do you know that I-----

JENNY. Because you've hinted as much, over and over again, both to my aunt and to myself; and-----

URIAH. There now ; the young are so quick. I shall see a gentleman—but there—perhaps I am too sanguine.

JENNY. (*following*) Mr. Underwood ! You will see a gentleman ?

URIAH. (*leading her to the centre, kneeling before her, fondling her, &c*) Are we so alone—my darling, eh ?—so alone—that none can see or hear-----

JENNY. Quite! quite !

URIAH. Can you be secret ?

JENNY. As the grave.

URIAH. And silent ?

JENNY. As a shadow.

URIAH. And be brave?

JENNY. Can you ask me—in such a cause ?

URIAH. But you must be so very brave; must steal out, near upon midnight, along the lonely moor—perhaps through the desolate snow—to the tarn—the Black Tarn, by the Logan Stone, at Dean-burn.

JENNY. Oh! Mr. Underwood! why there? and at such an hour?

URIAH. Because, to-night—late as it is—I shall see the gentleman I spoke of; and the Tarn is on my road back ; and in the morning, Jenny, I shall be away far from this.

JENNY. I daren't. I-----

URIAH. No, no! Well, then, forget what I said. Don't meet me! Don't! I only wished to do you a service. But there—never heed—never heed!

JENNY. I will ask-----

URIAH. Not a word to a soul—as you ever wish to learn your father's name, not a word to a soul.

*Enter* MRS. FRYER, L. 1 E.

MRS. P. Not gone !

URIAH. I am going. You will behold me never again. I am a wanderer—must I say a friendless wanderer—once more !

MRS. F. I am sorry if you are friendless, Mr. Underwood !

URIAH. Then you'll say good-bye at parting.

*(MRS. FRYER crosses; as she passes, URIAH seizes her hand and kisses it; at that moment JOHN FRYER passes the window and enters)*

JOHN. *(aside)* He kiss her hand!

MRS. F. Ah, John—dear John! how late you are. And New Year's Eve, too!

JOHN. Why, yes, I had a little business of my own at the factory. That made me late.

*(proceeding to hang up his coat, &c. and glancing at URIAH)*

MRS. F. *(to URIAH, as she crosses to arrange the supper, &c.)* Go, sir—spare a scene, and go. If I am silent to my husband, it's for his sake, not for yours.

*(business for MRS. FRYER unlacing JOHN'S boots, and putting on his slippers—he is sitting by fire)*

JENNY. *(aside to URIAH, as he crosses to JOHN)* I will come, Mr. Underwood.

URIAH. *(aside)* Good girl, good girl. I merely called to bid you a friendly farewell, Mr. Fryer. I have had a quarrel with Sir Peregrine. *(URIAH tears a leaf out of his pocket-book and begins to write)* You have known me----

JOHN. Known you and of you years, Uriah. You were tutor to one of the Beamish boys, up at the Grange. You led him into mischief and with young Hopeful were kicked out to perhaps worse mischief in London. There, in your shifty poverty, you tried to win my Jane ; and worse than that, you tried—but, there, we'll drop that. I managed to pull up just in time, so the least said about that the better. Deep—cunning-----

URIAH. That's it. This world is so uncommon wicked, that when they meet a simple-minded fellow like me, they say so and so—he's deep—oh, he's devilish deep. Well, good-bye.

JOHN. *(carelessly)* Good-bye.

URIAH. *(to JANE)* Good-bye! good-bye, Jenny, *(shakes hands with her, and gives the piece of paper on which he has written)* You'll not forget ? *(whispering)*

JENNY. Forget!

URIAH. *(aside)* That's it—the child—revenge on the proud wife, the cruel master—and it's the child shall do it all!—the child! *Exit, door in flat.*

MRS. F. Mrs Dyngell is upstairs, John. She expected to meet her husband—an accident—

JOHN. He'll be here directly—directly—he's safe enough.

MRS. F. Run up, Jenny, and tell Mrs. Dyngell—I'm sure she must be very anxious. And bid her to come down, Jenny, as soon as she's ready. *Exit JENNY upstairs, R.*

MRS. P. John!

JOHN. Jane, I—I can't be silent; I must speak, *(rising from chair*

MRS. F. Speak, John.

JOHN. For seven years you've been a good, true and a loyal wife to me. Often and often I think of that sad night of your sister's death, and I fancy there's not a pleasure I have or a pound I lay by but I owe it all to you, Jane.

MRS. F. Oh, John, you can't tell what a flash of joy shoots through my heart when I hear you speak like that.

JOHN. Well, this love—and with the whole strength of my manhood I do love you, Jane—is sometimes to me a curse.

MRS. F. John!

JOHN. It is so jealous—and I am jealous, I can't help it, of you and your old sweetheart, Uriah. Don't look like that, for sake of pity, Jane.

MRS. F. I've toiled for you with my hand, John, I have schemed for you with my brain; but if you whisper such a thought as that, it is not your roof-tree that should shelter your wife again, *(crossing, L.)*

JOHN. Jane, pity me, forgive me. *(following her)*

GREGORY. *(outside)* "Oh, my—Sally."

MRS. D. *(rushing downstairs followed by JENNY)* It's my Gregory!

*Enter GREGORY covered with dye, door in flat.*

MRS. D. Why, Gregory, Gregory, what have you been up to? Jenny, fetch me a soap and flannel, there's a good girl.

*Exit, JENNY, R.*

GREG. Oh, Sally, Sally, I've met with an accident and tumbled into the dye-vat; I'm a mixture. Oh, Sally, I shall never get my living by dyeing, shall I now?

MRS. D. And the chances upon chances that you have had, Gregory—the times upon times I've set you up.

GREG. First as a master sweep, and that I lost by the merest accident. I left a little boy sticking in the flue and was had up by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

MRS. D. Then I started in the boot line—and you left an awl in a customer's sole.

GREG. Then I went in for the pies. Now, I did pretty well at that, didn't I?

MRS. D. That you did, Gregory, for you eat up the whole of the stock the first night.

GREG. Well, I'm sure I suffered for it; they were so plaguy indigestible, I'd the nightmare for weeks after.

*JENNY enters R. 1 E., with soap and water.*

MRS. D. Oh, here's Jenny.

*(MRS. GREGORY tucks up her sleeves, makes him sit down, C. and begins to wash his face)*

GREG. Oh, Sally, Sally, you're a rubbing off my skin.

MRS. D. Off this dye shall come, Gregory, though your head should come off along with it.

*(when GREGORY'S face is nearly clean he rubs his sleeve over it, dirtying it once more. Business of scrubbing, c.*

*JENNY is R., reading the slip of paper left by URIAH.*

*MRS. FRYER and JOHN, L., by fire, having made up their quarrel)*

MRS. D. Shut your mouth, Gregory, unless you wish to eat all the soap.

GREG. I've eaten about a pound already, *(they go up to small table)*

JOHN. *(coming forward)* And you've forgiven me ?

MRS. F. I've more than forgiven—I've forgotten !

JOHN. Then I've got news for you. I am late to-night. It was to push a bargain that will bring us in heaps upon heaps of money. But it isn't that; it's the joy that it'll bring to you, Jane—that makes the light dance in my eye, and my heart to beat double quick time.

MRS. F. Ah, John, what—

JOHN. Don't be fluttered, now—don't be fluttered—turn the lamp this way—now see.

*(MRS. FRYER turns the lamp on to a small piece of silk, which JOHN brings from his pocket)*

MRS. F. What a superb colour!

JOHN. I've discovered it— all by myself, mind ; and I mean to call it " Pretty Jane," after you; and I've registered it, and I've sold it to Mr. Parkes, my master; and he says he'll make a fortune out of it—and guess, Jane, how much he's given me.

MRS. F. *(doubtingly)* One hundred.

JOHN. More—more!

MRS. F. John, you take my breath away.

JOHN. I won't tease you any longer, Jane—it's five thousand pounds—and—and—I choke almost while I say it—but, Jane, I've got the money. *(GREGORY, who has been listening, falls, and upsets table at back)*

JOHN. Pounds —not shillings—pounds ! You shall have a brave house to live in—you shall have silk dresses to wear ;

and I'll grind my soul out at your feet, Jane, but I'll make you bless the happy night when you transformed me to an honest man.

MRS. D. Do you hear that ?

GREG. Five thousand pounds !—I'll discover a dye myself to-morrow !

JENNY. Oh, uncle, dear uncle, you have made me so happy.

MRS. F. I laugh—and then my eyes burn, and I could cry.

JOHN. Come, come, it's late and you're wearied (*hurriedly arranging the cloth*) Supper's ready, lass—supper's ready—and see, I've brought in just a drop of brandy to toast our good luck with the new year, (*taking it from coat hanging up*). JENNY *has returned to her reading*) Now come, Jane, sit down, sit down. (JOHN *helps* MRS. F. *towards the table*—JENNY *runs towards her aunt to help*)

MRS. F. What is that you've been reading, eh, Jenny ?

JENNY. (*dropping it*) It's merely a stray piece of paper, nothing more.

(MRS. FRYER *turns the stew out which has been on the fire, and sits, L., with JENNY, L., and JOHN, C., at the table*)

GREG. Oh, ain't them onions a flavour, eh ? Capital things, onions.

MRS. D. Yes, to make your breath smell.

JOHN. Come, Jane, cheer up ! Why, this good news seems as terrible to you, Jane, as if it was the worst that ever was. Now, Mrs. Dyngcll, haven't you done polishing poor Gregory's face yet ? Sit down, now, (*aside*) Sooner they sit down, sooner they'll go!

MRS. D. Now we're ready. Come along, Gregory; you look a little more like a Christian.

(*rising to take their seats at the table*—GREGORY, *next audience, R., directly begins to eat*)

MRS. F. Whatever is the matter with you, Jenny ?

JENNY. (*who is abstracted, muttering, &c.*) Nothing, aunt; nothing.

MRS. F. (*aside*) She looks so abstracted, and appears so strange.

MRS. D. (*to her husband*) Well, I must say, Gregory, for a party who earns so little, you eat a confounded deal.

GREG. It's my mind, Sally. Such an intellect as mine requires an immense deal of keeping up.

(GREGORY *continually emptying and offering his plate*)

MRS. D. Well, I'm sure, Mr. Fryer, we're all very glad to hear of your good luck.

GREG. Sally! Sally!

MRS. D. What is it ?

GREG. The onions—they're a rising up in my inside like a lot of fire balloons.

MRS. D. Be quiet, Gregory. I suppose you'll be starting works of your own, Mr. Fryer.

JOHN. Call me John.

MRS. D. What! now you're so rich ?

JOHN. Oh, what's the good of money, Mrs. Dyngell, if it's to make us forget old friends !

GREG. Oh, Sally! I feel so queer. The onions !

MRS. D. Oh, Gregory! Gregory ! you've got your eye on the brandy bottle strong enough to draw the cork out!

GREG. It's only the onions! I say, John, I'm sorry to trouble you, but these onions make me feel so uncommon queer!

JOHN. It's a nip of brandy you want. Why didn't you say so before ? (*getting up and pouring it out*)

GREG. Well, I didn't say much, but I'm sure I looked it as hard as I could.

JOHN. Well, come now! Here's a happy new year to us all.

(*they each drink—GREGORY'S liquor goes the wrong way—*

MRS. DYNCELL *slaps him, &c., to bring him round*)

MRS. D. Now, I see you're all very tired, and I'll take the hint to be off. Jenny, just get my clothes from upstairs, will you ? I'll send Gregory with your things in the morning.

(*GREGORY takes every opportunity of having a suck out of the bottle*)

MRS. F. Jenny! how abstracted she is. Jenny !

JENNY. Yes, aunt.

MRS. F. Mrs. Gregory's clothes—upstairs—quick. (*JENNY runs upstairs, R.*)

MRS. D. Now, Gregory, you're too affectionate with that bottle.

GREG. Don't you in—interfere, (*filling again*) Here's *your* health.

MRS. D. Mine's as right as can be.

GREG. Then John's!

MRS. D. You've drained a glass to that already.

GREG. Then Mrs. John's!

MRS. D. You've done it!

GREG. Then here's a jolly good bumper to my own health—you can't object to that, I'm sure! (*emptying the bottle*)

MRS. D. Well, you'll have a rare good headache in the morning, that's one comfort, (*to JENNY, who enters with the bag*) Thank ye, my dear.

GREG. (*singing*) For he's a jolly good fellow ! he's a jolly good fellow!—he's a jolly good fellow!—for he's got five thousand pounds!

MRS. D. Oh, Gregory, Gregory! wait till I get you home.

GREG. It's the onions.

MRS. D. Onions! Good night, John, and I'm sure I am very glad of your good luck—you deserve it, John.

GREG. Good-night, John! I'm sure you're very glad of my good luck. *(repeating the words in a drunken way)*

MRS. D. I never saw such a man—one moment sober, and the next intoxicated.

GREG. Sally, I'm not intoxeo-i-cated—it's the onions.

MRS. D. Good night, dear! *(kissing MRS. FRYER)*

GREG. Good night, dear! *(about to do the same)*

MRS. D. Come away, you—you beast!

GREG. A beast! why you always said I was a gentleman.

MRS. D. A gentleman!—come away!

*Exit GREGORY and MRS. DYNGELL, door in flat—GREGORY returns once to drain a full glass he has left—during the following, JOHN closes the shutters and bolts the door, then extinguishes the lamp.*

JOHN. Come Jenny, lass—Bedfordshire—Bedfordshire—good night. *(JOHN hisses her)*

JENNY. Good night, aunt.

MRS. F. Why, Jenny, *(bringing her a little forward)* what is the matter? you seem so strange.

JENNY. Nothing, aunt, nothing. Good night. *(JENNY takes her candle—aside as she is going out)* How I long to be at the Black Tarn with Uriah Underwood. *Exit at staircase, R.*

JOHN. Jane, what is it that makes you so miserable? Is it what I said about Uriah? You must forgive me, Jane; I can't help being jealous, I am so fond-----

MRS. F. No, no; it's not that—I've forgotten that. You'll smile at me?

JOHN. Not I, Jane.

MRS. F. Well then, it's a feeling, a presence of a coming danger, which I can neither conquer nor control.

JOHN. You're weary, overwrought.

MRS. F. Is it with Jenny that this half knowledge, which makes my heart so dull and vacant, is allied? I must watch her—closely watch her.

JOHN. Come, dear true wife. My arm around your waist—your head reposing on my breast. Come to the pillow that shall rest the weary brain—come, true darling, come.

*Exeunt, L.—stage half dark—pause—music piano till end of scene—wind.*

*Enter JENNY, shrouding the candle.*

JENNY. I've stolen down stairs, so still that none could hear my footfall. It must be near the time, *(takes the candle to look at the clock)* I daren't delay. Uriah will be waiting.

*(undoes the bolts of the door—the wind, as it opens, blows the candle out)* How chill, how desolate is the night. I scarcely thought, till now, how distant is the spot, how deserted the road ;—but my father's name—to return in one flood of joy with my father's name. Yet my heart beats, and my lips tremble as though murder were afoot. Murder! Oh, Heaven! *(kneeling)* who from behind the stars guards the innocent and the helpless, protect a child on her lonely way to learn her father's name. *Exit at door.*

SCENE SECOND.—*An Illuminated Window in the west wing of Beamish House, half dark—a small tool house, R.—a magnolia is trailed on a trellis reaching up to the window, where the shadows of two figures are seen—small garden door under the window.*

*Enter* URIAH, L., *he feels his way to the tool house, and gets out a lantern—lights it as he speaks—Music.*

URIAH. I'm in time, then. 'Tis a fine thing for you, Sir Peregrine, to sleep on down, and waking, to gaze forth upon broad acres, of which, far as the eye can reach, you are the master. The master!—Ha, ha! the master! yes, yes, they are yours now; but one word from me, whom you spurned like a worthless cur from your door-step, can pluck them from you, and shew you to the world you prize as the miserable impostor I know you so well to be. Two figures !—in time then. Wait till the valet retires, then I'll talk to the master.

*(one shadow disappears—URIAH puts the lantern on the stage, and commences to climb the trellis-work towards the window)*

URIAH. Sir Peregrine. *(tapping at the window)*

SIR P. *(pulls up blind within)* Who's there ?

URIAH. Oh, it's only the beggar ! *(he dashes his fist through the glass. SIR PEREGRINE advances to the window, which he opens)* One breath of mine, and to morrow's dawn shall see a new owner for your acres. Who'll be the beggar then ? I know and remember : oh, I know, I know.

SIR P. And what may Uriah Underwood remember or know, that Sir Peregrine should be afraid to hear ?

URIAH. He'll tell you. He remembers that he was a witness to the secret marriage of your dead elder brother to Ellie Grierson in Brerewood Church. He knows that your brother died, leaving his wife to your care.

SIR P. And since his memory is so wondrous good, he may possibly recollect that she is dead.

URIAH. But he also knows that their *child* still lives, that she now waits for him, and that before the stroke of midnight

she shall know her father's name, (*he descends, goes to the tool home and gets a crowbar—music.*)

SIR P. (*having descended from platform behind and entered at garden door*) Uriah!

URIAH. (*suddenly turning back*) Ah ! I thought I should be wanted.

SIR P. (*as URIAH is going*) Stay, Uriah ! Dear Uriah !

URIAH. " Dear Uriah!" This morning it was " Out of my sight, beggar!" He thought he had squeezed the orange, but he finds a few drops of fresh juice in the fruit, and then it's " Uriah ! dear Uriah !"

SIR P. By my soul, I thought the child was dead; but be reasonable and I will reward you. Keep this knowledge to yourself.

URIAH. Before I stir one step to serve you—you who called me beggar shall *ask* my pardon! You—you with the blue blood, on which you pride yourself, coursing in your veins—shall ask pardon of Uriah Underwood, the beggar whom this morning you spurned from your lordly door. You pause. Oh, you hesitate. Good. Farewell, Sir Peregrine! (*going off, L.*)

SIR P. Uriah!

URIAH. Wanted again. I thought so. (*suddenly re-entering*)

SIR P. We've been old friends, Uriah, and I'm sure I'm very sorry that anything should arise between us.

URIAH, (*taking his hand*) Humph !

SIR P. But the girl! You would not tell her ?

URIAH. Well, that depends. The proofs are clear enough; there is the parish register containing the entry of your brother's marriage. I drugged the old clerk, and stole it myself; and there's the certificate of the child's birth.

SIR P. I'd give ten thousand pounds, Uriah, if that were the certificate of her death.

URIAH. If in your new year's revels to-morrow night you could move light-hearted among your neighbours, with the knowledge you were free-----

SIR P. One thing alone could make me thus—

URIAH. The death of the child !

SIR P. There's a dew on my brow while I say it; but that's it!—the death of the child ! A chance blow—an accident—and—ten thousand pounds—for *you*, Uriah, competence—for me, peace ; you will serve me ?

URIAH. What earnest have I that you will keep your word ?

SIR P. By my honour.

URIAH. Honour's but a thief's oath now.

SIR P. But what-----

URIAH. She meets me soon at the Black Tarn. Come with me—divide the sin—that shall be my security.

SIR P. No, no, Uriah ! I daren't.

URIAH. Brave words, those ! You would tempt another into a sin you are afraid to share ! Profit by a crime, and shrink like a coward from the chance of its detection. Listen ! the clock wears on to midnight; when it strikes—she—the girl—shall be either mistress of this mansion or ready for the turf!—which shall it be?

SIR P. I—I can argue no longer; I'll—I'll follow you, Uriah ! (URIAH goes to the tool-house and fetches a crowbar) One crime!—at midnight I shall be at peace, (going into garden door)

URIAH. And she—she too will be at peace—in her grave.  
*Exit, picking up the lantern, R.*

SCENE THIRD.—*The Logan Stone and Frozen Tarn. Peal of bells going. The centre of the stage is occupied by a flat piece of practicable ice ; this is surrounded by rocks except in front, which is clear; on the eminence at back, R., is an old Druidical rocking stone; the wings are formed by tall pines, one with a practicable branch ; in the extreme distance the bells are faintly heard ringing in the New Year. The scene is dark— thick floating clouds obscuring the moon, which, however is shewn at convenient intervals.*

URIAH discovered at the top, with a crowbar, and shelving the lantern. He slowly descends from rock to rock, until he reaches the end of the stage.

URIAH. There it sleeps—the water—silent—deep as fate itself; (*Music*) nor ebb nor flow beneath its armour of treacherous ice. (*Music*) Soon, very soon, shall a fair-haired corpse be tangled in its dark and noisome weeds! (*Music and wind*) How the wind howls, like a wild chorus of yelling demons; fit night for such a deed.

(URIAH takes up the lantern and holding it before him walks on the Tarn; he puts down the lantern, and with one or two vigorous thrusts attempts to crack the ice round Jenny's trap. SIR PEREGRINE'S voice is heard at the top of the scene calling " Uriah!"—URIAH starts)

URIAH. Pshaw, nothing! (*resumes his work*) Not in the wormy mould, but in the stubborn ice, I dig the victim's grave.

(*Music—each blow of the crowbar timed with a slight crash*)

*Enter SIR PEREGRINE, with gun.*

SIR P. (*repeating*) Dig the victim's grave !

URIAH. Was it some mocking echo, or a human voice ?

SIR P. It is I—Sir Peregrine ! (*advancing towards the rocking stone*)

URIAH. You could not, then, resist the fascination of crime, eh?

SIR P. What is this ?

URIAH. A rocking stone, such as oaked-leaved Druids worshipped in their sacred groves. A child could move the mass with its finger, while a giant could scarce wrench it from its base.

*(pause, as SIR PEREGRINE descends, watching URIAH, who resumes his work—when he has finished, he comes to SIR PEREGRINE, leaving the crowbar)*

SIR P. Ah, Uriah, murder is an awful thing!

URIAH. 'Tis dreadful only, when-----

SIR P. When what ?

URIAH. When it's discovered! Hush!

*(the voice of JENNY is heard)*

JENNY. *(outside at the top, R.)* Oh, Heaven, who from behind the stars watches the innocent and the helpless, guard a child on her lonely way to learn her father's name!

URIAH. *(L., with SIR PEREGRINE whispering quickly)* She's here!—the victim.

JENNY. *(at top)* Uriah—Mr. Underwood. My father's name.

URIAH. I have discovered it, and will tell it. Here, Jenny.

*(Music—he runs up to guide her from rock to rock, down the path which leads on to the ice—he then suddenly hides the lantern under his coat, and returns quickly across the Tarn to SIR PEREGRINE, who has concealed himself—chord)*

JENNY. Uriah! *(on the edge of the ice, R.)*

URIAH. Fear not. *(on the edge of the ice, L.)*

JENNY. Why, then, have you left me ?

URIAH. To get the register—the very leaf out of the parish register, which bestows on you a name.

JENNY. Oh, Uriah, my heart trembles. I must return.

URIAH. Return, then—fatherless, as you came!

JENNY. Dare I trust you ?

URIAH. You must, if you would know the truth! Come here, it's safe enough. Walk straight to the light—so.

*(URIAH holds the lantern, the bells cease, and the distant clock strikes twelve, as JENNY commences slowly to cross with the last stroke she falls in—the bells, very distant, begin to fire for the New Year. Music for all this)*

SIR P. Great Heaven.

URIAH. The bells fire for the New Year, and we are safe.

*(the moon, bursting out, reveals the figure of MRS. FRYER on the eminence near the rocking stone)*

MRS. F. No! Ruined, Uriah! Body and soul, ruined.

*(MRS. FRYER tears at the practicable branch of the tree,*

*and screams " Murder, Jenny," &c.—all this as quick as lightning till climax)*

URIAH. Swift as thought, the gun ! *(he seizes the gun from SIR PEREGRINE, and fires)*

MRS. F. *(having torn away the branch, places it under the rocking stone, using it as a kind of lever)* Useless, Uriah—my life is charmed against, your bullet. Oh, Heaven, give me a giant's strength. Help! murder ! Help !

URIAH. *(clubbing the gun, and leaping up the eminence)* Must I, then brain her?

*(simultaneously with his reaching her, the rocking-stone totters and slides off, cracking the whole of the ice—crash.*

MRS. FRYER *leaps in after it)*

URIAH. Too late ! We must fly, or we are lost!—two travellers have heard the screams—the report of the gun—and are coming as fast as their steeds can bear them, *(rapidly descending)* Quick, Sir Peregrine ; quick !

SIR P. Mercy of Heaven ! Look there!

*(the face of MRS. FRYER is seen above the ice)*

MRS. F. My head above the ice ! My hand close woven in her hair ! Murder! help !

*(with her other hand alternately clinging to, and endeavouring to break the ice)*

URIAH. Rouse, man ! and away !

MRS. F. *(getting JENNY'S head above the ice)* At last! at last! Thank heaven ! *(she seizes the crowbar, which URIAH has left upon the ice, and breaks her way towards shore)* Arms round my neck, Jenny ! Cling to me, darling ! cling to me !

*(MRS. FRYER reaches the land, and drags JENNY out of the water in a fainting state. JENNY sinks on ground, MRS. FRYER bending over her)*

URIAH. Jane, you will be silent! *(advancing close to her)*

MRS. F. Silent! I'll yell the sin out in the open street! Murderers! murderers of an innocent child! Oh! Heaven restore her!

*(MRS. FRYER chafes JENNY'S hands, &c, who is quite senseless and inanimate)*

URIAH. Hark ye! do you love your husband ? Hear what I say—your husband !

MRS. F. Murder ! Help ! Murder !

URIAH. Remember the plate—the bank note he forged !

MRS. F. Remember! But he returned it!

URIAH. But he forged it—and his name is at the back ! Let him explain that. I shan't help him. One word—one hint—one breath—and your husband, woman, shall be a convict in a foreign land !

MRS. F. A convict !

URIAH. A convict! Your silence, or his banishment. Choose !

MRS. F. Choose! John a convict!

URIAH. They are here. Speak as I dictate, or you condemn your husband to his doom !

1ST MAN. (*at the top*) The meaning of this alarm ?

URIAH, (*concealed with SIR PEREGRINE, L., behind rock piece*) Mistaking our way in the darkness-----

MRS. F. Mistaking our way in the darkness.

URIAH. My niece lost her footing-----

MRS. F. My niece lost her footing.

URIAH. And slipped into the tarn.

MRS. F. And slipped into the tarn.

URIAH. I became alarmed, and shrieked for help.

MRS. F. I became alarmed, and shrieked for help.

1ST MAN. Who fared the gun ?

URIAH. The gentlemen who rescued us.

MRS. F. The gentlemen who rescued us.

1ST MAN. Where are they ?

URIAH. (*coming forward with SIR PEREGRINE*) The gentlemen are here.

END OF ACT FIRST.

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 The Scene was originally played this way, but afterwards concluded without the Travellers, and with a picture of MRs. FRYER and JENNY out of the ice; but the reason of the Travellers coming on is to account for the two men not killing the women when they are out of the ice; and the stage-manager will, therefore finish the Act as he pleases.

The piece representing the ice is of irregular form and made like a flat; there are three traps, one near the L., for JENNY to descend, one at the extreme back for the Logan Stone to crash through, and another through which MRS. FRYER descends on a sote, the top of this sote represents a piece of projecting rock, on which she stands when dislodging the rocking stone; the effect of MRS. FRYER breaking along the ice could be done either by a laced slit in the Canvas, or better by making it out like a child's puzzle. There is a platform from R. U. E. to c. of stage, towards L., at the end of which the rocking stone is poised. The path which, starting from the top, R., winds to the bottom also R., divides when near the stage. One of these smaller paths leads on to the stage, the other branches at right angles, on to the ice. The ice-piece is set on an incline, and underneath it there is a board, used by URIAH and JENNY, and removed before MRS. FRYER breaks along.

## ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*Same scene at Act I., Scene I. The furniture, &c., in the same state, except that the fire is out. The remnants of the supper on the table.*

JOHN FRYER *discovered reading the slip of paper which JENNY had dropped, and which had been given to her by URIAH.*

JOHN. (*reading*) " My pet,—Remember your midnight appointment with Uriah at the Black Tarn." Uriah's appointment! and with my wife! with Jane! Can she be false to me—to her husband, who loved her so ? Has she—I dare hardly think it—has she gone from me ? The fear sinks like lead into the very life-springs of my being! Gone from me! Oh, why had she not, in the old time, forsaken me that I might have starved in the street, or festered in the gaol ? I must go out, out and cool my burning brow in the icy winter air. (*dashing open the door*) Good heaven! Two shadows on the snow-clad moor! the one, my once darling wife; the other—the other—Uriah Underwood ! Uriah! (*in a paroxysm of passion, he rushes to the gun which is over the mantel-piece, and takes the pouch and shot-belt which hangs underneath, and is beginning rapidly to load it: he stops*) Yet, patience, patience, but for a little, only a little ; for let me but know your guilt, and, by the heaven that made us, Uriah Underwood, I'll slay ye where ye stand. (*retires, R. at intervals, during the following dialogue, the audience notice him very quietly loading the weapon*)

*Enter MRS. FRYER, door in flat—totters to the door, and clings to it—she is in a state of bewilderment—she crosses the angle of the stage, towards the entrance of the bed room, L., where she listens.*

MRS. F. The place as I left it. John, undisturbed, sleeps on. (*looking round*) Jenny ! Jenny! (*she goes up to the door to look after her, when she is met by URIAH*)

*Enter URIAH, door in flat.*

MRS. F. Ah ! You here, murderer ! Jenny! Where is Jenny ?

URIAH. Oh, she's safe ! I've told her to stay behind.

MRS. F. (*going down, L.*) Murderer!

URIAH. Murder! Not quite, eh?

MRS. F. Had I not, suspicious of Jenny's manner, missed her—found the door open, and traced her step by step through the snow, it would have been quite murder then, Uriah Underwood!

[ " URIAH. Hark, ye! Do you love your husband! Do you hear what I say—your husband!

MRS. F. *Love him ? I adore him !*

URIAH. Remember, then, the plate—the bank note he forged.

MRS. F. But he returned it.

URIAH. Ay—but he *forged* it, and *his name* is at the back of it. One breath, and your husband, woman, shall be a convict in a foreign land. Your silence, or his banishment !

MRS. F. A convict!

URIAH. Your silence, or his banishment !

MRS. F. My John, my darling John a convict! no, no, the thought is maddening ! Away, away, base wretch ! I will be silent as to your guilt—but your presence here under my husband's roof\*]—away—why have you followed here?

URIAH. Can you not imagine ? Suppose John had missed you—suppose he had taxed you? Unless I had been here, ready with my friendly warning, you might, you know—you might have told your husband-----

MRS. F. Might have told what ? Speak out.

URIAH. Well, (*louder*) if you will have it, the nature of our business at the Black Tarn.

JOHN. (*putting down the gun, L., and coming forward, L.*) He can surmise it, Uriah Underwood.

MRS. F. (*going to him*) John !

JOHN. Go from me, Jane. (MRS. FRYER *stops*) Now, Jane, if you'd have me believe you innocent—and Heaven knows it is my dearest wish—tell me, tell me, why you forsook my very arms to meet Uriah Underwood at the Black Tarn.

URIAH. (*aside to her, R.*) If you dare to hint-----

JOHN. But shew me—in pity, shew me that you are true and loyal. You've been a dear, good wife to me, and how deep my love—how wild my passion, heaven alone can tell. A word can proclaim your purity. Speak it—relieve my swelling heart, and speak it—and I, your husband, shall bless you, Jane—shall bless you for evermore.

URIAH, (*aside*) That word, and he would curse you, Jane !

JOHN. Come, Jane. I am your husband, woman. Plain question, plain answer—on what business did you meet Uriah at the Black Tarn ?

URIAH. Mr. Fryer!

JOHN. Silence, you—silence, you—your turn has not yet come.

MRS. F. I've been a wife to you, John Fryer, faithful and

\* If Act I. concludes with the Travellers, this dialogue is unnecessary.

fond, for this many and many a year. I have shared your poverty, John, and ministered to your success. Ask your own good heart, then, if your wife has not earned the right to be believed when, before the heaven that made her she attests the innocence of her soul—the purity of her honour!

JOHN. One word would clear the shadow from the name.

URIAH. (*aside*) Yes, but that word, and the convict garb for him.

JOHN. You are silent. These lines, written by Uriah, were they not to you?

MRS. F. (*rushing to him, on her knees*) See, John, I am on my knees before you. By the mutual love which has been the link between us, let my wifely duty in the past be a pledge for my wifely honour in the present. John—John----- (*all this quick*)

JOHN. (*dragging her up towards the gun*) A word would clear you, but that word is still unspoken—enough for you—but for him-----

(JOHN has broken away from MRS. FRYER and seized the gun, pointing it at URIAH—MRS. FRYER rushes down between them)

MRS. F. No, no, not murder, John! husband!

(*knocking the gun up as it fires, in the struggle—use only a percussion cap*)

JOHN. You would protect him, then, (*reversing the gun end about to rush on URIAH*) Away, away, or in my rage I might kill even thee.

MRS. F. Slay me then, John, slay me, for I could die from your hand with a blessing on my lips.

(JOHN drops the gun and totters into a chair—Picture)

*Enter JENNY, door in flat.*

JENNY. Aunt, (*running to her*)

MRS. F. (*bringing her away from JOHN towards URIAH, R.*) Hush! be very quiet, Jenny, very calm and still, (*advancing slowly towards him*) John.

JOHN. Once more, Jane—dear Jane—calmly as a child should seek forgiveness of its parent, I ask you why you met Uriah Underwood at the Black Tarn?

URIAH. (*to MRS. FRYER*) If she speaks—the doom!

JENNY. Why—uncle—I—I—my aunt—indeed----- (*going towards JOHN*)

MRS. F. (*rushing to her and bringing her down, c.*) I love you, Jenny, do I not?

JENNY. Aunt!

MRS. F. Then for the sake of that very love, you must not whisper a syllable—for his sake, not for ours, (*aside to her*)

JOHN. Enough! I ask no more. You remember, Jane, what you said last night, that if I suspected you with Uriah—that-----

MRS. F. My own lips shall complete the sentence—that it was not your roof tree that should shelter-me again.

JOHN. Well, then, I more than suspect—I-----

MRS. F. Enough! In this very cottage I was born. 'Twas here my father died—my mother gave her soul to heaven—and here—oh, dear remembrance—I shared a husband's love. I go, John, I go ! but some day, though in a far-off future, you will know how clear was my soul from sin, and how much I suffer for the sake of your good name. *Exit URIAH, door in flat.*

JOHN. I'm bewildered, Jane.

MRS. F. The word is spoken, John; the past is only a memory, the future is only a dream.

JOHN. You leave me—I—Heavens! what can I say ?

MRS. F. Leave what was my home for the barren moor, the drifting snow, and the pitiless—pitiless wind.

JOHN. Oh, I wait for Uriah ! I wait for Uriah !

JENNY. (*approaching JOHN*) Good-bye, uncle.

JOHN. You, you too forsake me; you at least are pure and innocent. Do not leave me, Jenny.

JENNY. I pity you, uncle, but I must go, I must. She (*pointing to JANE*) is my truest friend; where she wanders I too must wander to share her simple pallet, divide her humble meal.

MRS. F. Farewell, old home! to me a nest of joy, where every chair had some pleasant memory, where even the ticking of the old clock was as the voice of a familiar friend; but farewell, old home —farewell! (*Air, piano—" Home sweet home."*) Close to me, Jenny; close to me. (*they are going off*)

JOHN. Stay—only a moment—stay. If you are no longer true wife, Jane, I am your husband still. See—see—here's the money I was so proud to earn, that you might share my triumph. Take it, Jane, take it; and let me have at least the knowledge that want is a stranger to your door.

MRS. F. (*near the door*) Money! Not a coin. No, John, money was never the god that married us, and money shall never cover with its useless gilt the slimy sorrow of our separation. *Exit at door in flat, with JENNY.*

JOHN. Where is Uriah? Where is Uriah? (*dashing open doors R. and L.*) Fled like a cur, but to-night I shall meet him ; to-night at Beamish Grange. But Jane, (*falling into a chair*) my Jane! the wife I loved, false, false, and gone. The old life of joy and happiness is dead with the dead past, (*he looks round, and stops the pendulum of the Dutch clock*) Henceforth I am born into a new existence, in which, grain for grain and drop

for drop, I will exact an utmost measure for my soul-consuming wrong.

MRS. P. (*dashing the window open*) John !

JOHN. Jane ! (*rushing to her*)

MRS. F. Bless you, John ! Oh, Heaven bless you!

(*picture and closed in*)

SCENE SECOND.—*The Road to London across a desolate moor. On the wing, L., is affixed a milestone.*

*Enter* MRS. FRYER *and* JENNY, R.

MRS. F. Alas! Yesterday, joy upon our lips, and sunshine in our souls ; to-day, homeless, shelterless, and outcast.

JENNY. The clouds are dark, dear aunty; but remember the bright heaven there is beyond them. But you are cold : let me wrap your shawl more tightly around you. How wicked it was of Uncle Fryer.

MRS. F. Hush, Jenny! not a word—not a word against him. I remember only that he is my husband still.

GREG. (*without, R.*) Hullo—hi—stop,- Mitheth Fryer. Hi—hullo ; I've caught you at lath.

*Enter* GREGORY, *with two bundles precisely alike.*

JENNY. Why, Mr. Dyngell, what ?

GREG. Bait—idst—idst.

JENNY. Why, Mr. Dyngell, whatever is the matter?

GREG. I've got a code in my node, and I want to snede.

(*sneezes and falls down*)

*Enter* MRS. DYNGELL, R.

MRS. D. Oh ! what you're at it again, are you ?

JENNY. You're not hurt, Gregory ?

MRS. D. No, no; *Mr.* Dyngell. Dyngell is a perfect gentleman, and shan't be called out of his name. (*helping him up*)

JENNY. Then, Mr. Dyngell, I hope you didn't hurt yourself?

MRS. D. (*crossing*) Now cheer up, Jane; I've heard all about it; so I woke Gregory up from his full sleep, and says I, " she's an old friend; we won't stay here," says I," and she all lonely on the road." So I digs Gregory in the ribs, and says, Get up Gregory, we'll pack up our things and be after 'em. Says I, " They'll want the protection of a man," and Dyngell's more than a man, for Dyngell's a perfect gentleman.

GREG. Ut, ut, ut, tissue, (*sneezing*)

JENNY. Aunty, you seem so fatigued, let us rest for awhile. See there is a shed beyond, which will at least afford shelter from the pitiless, biting wind.

GREG. (*to SALLY*) Don't they want anything to eat. See, I've brought the larder with us. (*holding out the two bundles*)

MRS. D. Which bundle is it in ?

GREG. 'Pon my soul I can't tell. I had to pack it up in such a hurry with our wardrobe; and as for the bundles, why either is so like neither, that you can't tell either from which.

MRS. F. So once more to London, to take up my life again just where I left it five years since. But my sacrifice has saved John's good name, that's my thought and my consolation. *(aside)*

JENNY. Come, aunty, rest, rest, and then for London.

MRS. F. Yes, Jenny, to mighty London, sometimes the grave of hope; to us, let us trust, a Paradise for our despair.

*Exit with JENNY, L.*

MRS. D. Oh, oh! *(crying)* To think o' that Fryer behaving in such a way.

GREG. *(crying also)* I—I couldn't a believed it. *(business of both crying)* I say, Sally, what are we both crying for ? I say, Sally, do you feel anything, Sally ?

MRS. D. Why, Gregory, whatever do you mean ?

GREG. Don't you a—feel a vacuum, Sally ?

MRS. D. A vacuum? Well, we ain't had our breakfast, have we ?

GREG. Time to begin, I should fancy. I say, don't this air give you an appetite ? I packed up all our larder with our clothes. Look ye here, this milestone will do for a table, and when we've emptied 'em of our larder, we can sit on the bundles, *(beginning to open one, SALLY opens the other)* See, there's the cold fowl, the pickled pork, and the butter, *(looking over the bundle)* The cold fowl—where is it ? *(takes his hat off, his hair is a bright green)*

MRS. D. Bless me, Gregory, why your hair is turned green!

GREG. Green, Sally ?

MRS. D. Green, Gregory !

GREG. It must have been the dye. It must have been the dye-vat. Why, Sally, when we get to London we'll advertise the article, and it will make our fortune! *(they are still looking for the fowl)*

MRS. D. Nonsense ; who wants green hair, I should like to know?

GREG. Everybody ; it will be such a novelty. Where the dickens is that bird, now?

MRS. D. Oh-h !

GREG. What's the matter, Sally ?

MRS. D. *(shewing it in a large worsted stocking)* Why, Gregory, Gregory, you've popped it up in your stocking.

GREG. We had to pack in such a deuce of a hurry.

MRS. D. But the pickled pork ?

GREG. Mind that little packet, Sally—that's all our pawn tickets.

MRS. D. And is that the careless way you treat these precious documents—the mortgage deeds of all our property ? But the pickled pork-----

GREG. Oh-h ! (*putting something behind him*)

MRS. D. What is it—what's this you're hiding?

(*she eventually takes it from him—it is a very long nightcap—she passes her hand outside down it, and there is something at the bottom of it*)

GREG. Well, Sally, I won't deceive ye, it's the pickled pork.

MRS. D. You've quite disgusted me. Well, then, Gregory, that's enough, I'm sure ; I can't eat a bit—pack it up and follow me. Really, sometimes you go on in such a peculiar way, that I almost forget you are such a perfect gentleman.

GREG. You won't have a morsel, eh ? What, not a snack—just a snack ? Well, then, Sally, I suppose we must pack it up again, and give it to our servants. (*GREGORY packs up the bundles again, flinging one of the bundles over his shoulder*) Oh, oh my! (*shewing the end of a fork protruding through the bundle*) People ought to be careful how they pack their forks. *Exit with SALLY, L.*

SCENE THIRD.—*The Old Hall in Beamish Grange prepared for the New Year's revel. Doors, C.*

TENANTS, SERVANTS, GUESTS, &c., *discovered drinking, each wearing a sprig of laurel. At the back, R., one party of CHILDREN are playing " Hunt the' slipper;" another, L., " Kiss in the ring."* One MAN enters with a tremendous log, which he carries across, and pitches it on the fire; a slight elevated dais along the wall, R., on which are chairs for Sir Peregrine and his party. A huge bundle of holly suspended, C.—*through the old-fashioned windows, R. and L., in back flats, the moon is seen shining on the snow; a ruddy glare from the fire, L. SIR PEREGRINE enters, followed by URIAH, R.—all rise.*

URIAH. (*aside to him*) Be calm; be yourself. Your manner may rouse suspicion.

SIR P. But the husband ! Should he have discovered ?

URIAH. Fear nothing. He has been here, and been expelled. The thickness of the wall divides us. To meet your tenants and humble neighbours on this the first night of the New Year is a time-honoured custom of the Beamishes for centuries past. Rouse—your guests; (*pointing to two LADIES and a*

GENTLEMAN *who enter, L.*) and the mummers, too, are ready with their old carols. Come, Sir Peregrine.

(SIR PEREGRINE bows to the LADY, and takes her arm up to the dais; the GENTLEMEN follow. URIAH moves about among the PEOPLE, who sit when SIR PEREGRINE seats himself and gives the signal to begin. A murmur of "The mummers, mummers!" First party of MUMMERS, (men), enter from L. 1 E., with jugs of water; they pass from L. to R., and up towards SIR PEREGRINE, with a step in time to the measure of their song; the CHILDREN are sent round by the MOTHERS to get sprinkled by the water which the MUMMERS scatter out of their jugs. The dress is the ordinary one of labourers, but they wear bands of holly, sprigs of holly in their caps, and carry short sticks bound round with holly, which they strike together in tune with the carol)

*Carol.*

Here we bring new water  
From the well so clear,  
For to worship heaven with,  
This first night of the year,  
And our wassail!

ALL. And our wassail!

SECOND PARTY OF MUMMERS, *girls, (outside door, c.)*

Good dame, here at your door,  
Our wassail we begin ;  
We are all maidens poor,  
I pray now let us in,  
With our wassail!

ALL. With their wassail!

1ST PARTY. *(on stage)* Sing reign of fair Marie,  
With gold, upon her chin,  
Open you the door, then,  
To let the New year in,  
With its wassail!

ALL. With its wassail!

*(by this time the party of MUMMERS on stage have ranged themselves before SIR PEREGRINE)*

PARTY. *(outside)* Good dame, here at your door  
Our wassail we begin.

PARTY. *(inside)* Open you the door then,  
And let the New Year in.

CHORUS. Open you the door, &c.

(SIR PEREGRINE, prompted by URIAH, gives the requisite permission. A general shout as everybody rushes up to the c. door to let in the New Year. A party of GIRLS enter with the wassail bowls, and join the others. The last party of MUMMERS are led by a BLIND PEDLAR, who is preceded by a BOY)

MUMMERS. Much joy unto this hall,  
With us is entered in ;  
Our master, first of all,  
We hope will now begin.

With our wassail!

(prompted by URIAH, SIR PEREGRINE. drinks. The measure of their song changes, and the MUMMERS run in and out among the crowd, who eagerly follow them for a drink out of the bowl. A lively movement—everybody in laughing motion)

ALL THE MUMMERS.

Wassail! wassail! over the town !  
Our toast it is white—our ale it is brown ;  
Our bowl it is made of a maplin tree,  
We be good fellows all—we drink to thee,  
With our wassail!

ALL. With their wassail!

(the GIRLS get the BUTLER on one side and dance round him, coaxingly)

GIRLS. Come, butler, come, bring us a bowl o' the best,  
And we hope your soul in heaven may rest!

(MEN breaking through the GIRLS, and shaking their sticks at him and running him into a corner)

MEN. But if you do bring us a bowl of the small,  
Then down fall butler, bowl and all!

(the MUMMERS and the rest then execute a characteristic country dance. URIAH comes forward)

URIAH. (aside to SIR PEREGRINE) Sir Peregrine—you, you must speak—you must welcome them.

SIR P. I can't, Uriah ! that scream still rings within my ear—that vision still flits before my eyes.

URIAH. Say a few words, only a few!

SIR P. If the husband should have heard-----

URIAH. Courage—I—I implore you—courage !

(during this the LADIES and GENTLEMEN have gone down from the dais to talk to the PEOPLE— the LADIES praising the CHILDREN, &c. URIAH advances and lifts up his hand—the PEOPLE cry, "The master, the master!" and are silent)

SIR P. (*advancing*) Friends, neighbours, on this, the first night of the New Year, I—ah, Uriah! (*starting towards L.—commotion*)

URIAH. (*following* SIR PEREGRINE) What—what is it ? What has alarmed Sir Peregrine ?

JOHN. (C.) Surely it couldn't be John Fryer ? (*he has entered through the CROWD, and should not be seen by the Audience until he quietly turns round*)

URIAH. Can his wife have returned—should she have told?

JOHN. I thought it was open house at Beamish Grange on this, the first night of the New Year, yet I am denied—the door shut in my face. Does the master do it by the orders of his servant? (*pointing to* URIAH) If so, I am here to ask the reason of the servant; and if he don't tell it, I shall.

URIAH. (*slowly advancing*) If you come here in peace, I have Sir Peregrine's authority that you are welcome; but if---

JOHN. (*aside to him*) I have come here, Uriah, because here there are people ; I would not wait you in the lonely lanes, for I might kill you, and your life I would preserve, that it may become one useless prayer for death. Here, before all, I shall reveal the base thing you are; then will I haunt you ever, till my vengeful face mingling with your guilty dreams, makes life to you the burden and the curse which you have made it to mine and to me.

URIAH. (*going up to* SIR PEREGRINE) Sir Peregrine, I've known him years : there's more danger in his stillness than in his passion. We must be prepared for the worst. Have you the proofs ?

SIR P. What proofs?

URIAH. The paper, the plate of the foreign note which he ---- (*going across with* SIR PEREGRINE)

SIR P. Upstairs in the bureau in my study.

URIAH. Fetch then quickly, they may be wanted.

*Exit* SIR PEREGRINE, R.

Sir Peregrine has been ill and the heat affects him. (*going, R.*)

JOHN. You're not going, Uriah Underwood ? No, no ! Please don't go! I'd rather you'd not go!

URIAH. (*aside*) What can he mean ?

JOHN. What! is there a pause in the revel ? What, none to offer the merry song, the lively measured jig? Well, my head is something in a maze! But one volunteer, they say, is worth I don't know how many pressed men; and I, John Fryer, volunteer.

ALL. Bravo ! Bravo !

JOHN. Oh, don't expect too much ; it's only a story, a short.

simple story; but with all the dew of the fresh New Year upon it!

ALL. Bravo ! Hear, hear!

JOHN. Well, then, ladies, gentlemen, kind neighbours, this story of mine. It begins years since, and in the stifling alleys of the stony town-----

URIAH. (*aside*) Tis of himself he would relate the story!

JOHN. Come, good neighbours, (*they come round*, LADY, L. C.) and see, with my eyes, a man. There he is, living in a fetid court; an idle leaf upon the tide of time; stricken with poverty, tainted, perhaps, with sin ! And see, as he is sinking lower and lower into the deeps, a woman—oh, may the sweet heaven bless her !—stretches forth her hand to save; teaches him the nobility of honest labour, and the happiness which attends on truth!

URIAH. Will Sir Peregrine never return ? (*going*, R.)

JOHN. Stop, Uriah Underwood! I cannot afford to lose one auditor, and least of all, you! To resume. This pearl among the women becomes his—his, to fondle—to worship—to be the very darling of his humble home !

LADY. Then—then she is his wife ?

JOHN. *Is? Was!—was!* Oh, agony, that I should say it, she was his wife; and, with the whole intensity of that man's coarse, rough nature, he grew to love her as he should have loved his God.

LADY. Can this be real ? His voice trembles ?

JOHN. You, sir, and gentle madam, dwelling in your lordly mansions, you know not what a priceless jewel is a wife-made home to a workman's heart. To return, after long hours of labour, to the meal *she* has prepared—to note each feature of *her* face one smiling welcome at your return—to change your toil-stained garments, and read with her the books she loves to hear; or, in the ripening spring-time, with arms entwined, to wander in the primrose fields, and to believe that the very lark—who rises up, up, that he may steal some wayward snatch of seraph song, with which to gladden earth—that the very lark is less happy in his cheery carol than the poor workman and his wife who watches him as he soars.

URIAH. (*aside*) It is Sir Peregrine !—I can distinguish, just distinguish his descending step upon the stair.

JOHN. And so in this Paradise of perfect joy the years which such happiness made brief rolled on. The angel wife had inspired the workman's soul; reading had enlarged his mind; poesy fired his imagination; study sharpened his intellect; from being a poor, almost guilty, forsaken wretch, he found himself a man among the men—ay, a king among his fellows.

LADY. How perfect the tint, how sunny the landscape!

JOHN. Sunny, lady ?—oh, wait, wait, for the darkness approaches too soon. In the very flood-tide of this tranquil happiness, when exertion had been rewarded by wealth, the destroyer came and made an arid desert of that fertile land.

URIAH. Sir Peregrine!

*Enter SIR PEREGRINE, R. 1 E.—he whispers URIAH.*

LADY. A destroyer ? the wretch!

JOHN. And such a wretch ! think, only think, how remorseless his soul, how fathomless his heart, when he could come and steal from the workman's arms his wife !

VOICE. His wife ? impossible !

JOHN. Impossible ? impossible ? I tell you this is no idle story, but a fact—a fact not twelve hours old, for I, John Fryer-----

SIR P. John Fryer—hush! Let no one leave this house. John Fryer, are you an engraver ? (*going up to him, C.*)

JOHN. I have been ; yes.

SIR P. Singular ! Five years since a friend of mine discovered an attempt to forge sundry foreign notes; here is the proof, and the very plate with the workman's name on the back—the name is John Fryer!

JOHN. But I returned it, and how come you, Sir Peregrine, by this plate ?

URIAH. All that shall be explained at your trial.

JOHN. Trial?

ALL. Trial?

URIAH. Yes, at your trial for *forgery!* (*all shrink from JOHN*)

JOHN. Forgery?

URIAH. (*aside to him*) Oh ! I'm the destroyer, am I ? My cunning is fathomless, eh ? You, at least, have not plumbed its depth. It shall make you felon, John Fryer, (*the doors are closed—URIAH, R. C.*)

JOHN. A moment, friends, for the conclusion of this New Year's tale. Who makes the false accusation ? Uriah Underwood! Who blighted the happiness of my home ? Uriah Underwood!—this same Uriah Underwood—(*suddenly seizing him, R., and flinging him, c.*) who, like a poor guilty wretch, lies quivering at my feet! (*Picture*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

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A Lapse of Twelve Months.  
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## ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*The exterior of the Guildhall in the city of Exeter, during the Assizes; the pillars of the portico are in second or third grooves, the backing in the further groove.*

POLICEMEN, WITNESSES, &c., *discovered—movement—Enter a BARRISTER in wig and gown from L, towards the Court, with an ATTORNEY at his button-hole, as though explaining a case—MRS. FRYER is leaning against one of the pillars in, a state of almost exhaustion, JENNY is consoling her—a MAN lounges from the Court towards L.—MRS. FRYER points him out to JENNY, who directly runs after him with her orange-basket—PEOPLE, POLICEMEN, &c., lounging about.*

JENNY. Oranges, sir ; fine St. Michael's, sir; two for three-halfpence, sir!

MAN. Two for three-halfpence, eh? (*choosing two big ones*) Give you a penny for these!

JENNY. A penny, sir ! they cost us nearly as much, they did indeed. (*MAN throws them down and is going, JENNY runs after him*) Don't turn away, sir ; you shall have them; they're the first I've sold to-day.

MAN. You seem rather out of sorts, little one. Why, you'll never sell your oranges with such a face as that.

JENNY. Then I must be cheerful, I suppose, sir; but it's hard to wear the smile upon the lip when the sorrow is in the heart.

MAN. You seem weary.

JENNY. We've been days on the road from London, sir. We came here to-----

MAN. To what, my little one ?

JENNY. To hear about a man, sir, who is now standing his trial in there, sir.

MAN. What, do you mean Uriah Underwood, the steward of Sir Peregrine Beamish, who is accused of stealing a parish register ?

JENNY. The same, sir.

MAN. Is he a friend of yours ?

JENNY. A friend? Heaven help us, he has been our bitterest enemy.

MAN. There, then, I'll ask no more. There's an extra penny or two. (*JENNY takes his hand and cries over it*) Why, my lass, you're crying?

JENNY. I—I can't help it, sir. If you'd scolded or beaten me, the poor are so used to it, that I should have said no word, sir; but I am so strange to an act of kindness that I welcome

it with a tear of joy. (MAN *goes up*) Little boy! (a BOY *comes down*, R.) You mind my oranges, will ye? and if anybody should want to buy any, those are a penny each, and that lot two for three-halfpence. *Exit*, L.

POLICEMAN. (*from Court*, to MRS. FRYER) Come, come, you mustn't stay here ; you must move on. (*pushing her forward*)

MRS. F. (*coming meekly forward*) I can't help lingering. I couldn't help coming from London, all penniless as I was, to learn Uriah's fate. Yet I would not see him; but I could not resist coming, as though the hand of fate impelled me. Now it is Uriah Underwood in the felon's dock ; one year since it was my poor husband, John Fryer.

SULLIVAN. (*a ticket-of-leave man, overhears the last words*, Beg pardon, what name did you say, John Fryer? Do you mean him as—as is in trouble at Portland?)

MRS. F. The old bitter reproach !

SULLI. No, don't, don't go away. Hush ! I've just come from the island myself. Hush! I don't want the police to hear. If they knew I'd a ticket-o'-leave in my pocket they might put a black mark agin me, and I wish to be honest, if I can !

MRS. F. But John—my husband.

SULLI. Hush! That policeman seems to notice us—he's reckoning me up.

POLICE. (*intercepting SULLIVAN*) I say, young man, your hair is uncommon short.

*Enter JENNY, L., with tea and a loaf.*

SULLI. Well, what if it is ! it's the fashion ain't it ?

POLICE. Yes, at Portland! You'd better look out, young man—we shall have our eye on you.

SULLI. Yes, oh, yes ; you and your friends 'ull have your eyes on me so precious sharp, that I shan't be able to get an honest crust, and be obliged to steal for a living once more.

*Exit*, L.

JENNY. (*to BOY at basket*) Ain't sold any, eh? Well, there, never mind, there's a good big 'un for yourself. See, dear aunty, here's some tea and a loaf.

MRS. F. I have no appetite; eat it yourself, Jenny.

JENNY. No, no—we'll share it; but you must have the largest half, because you know you're bigger than I am, and require a deal more than I do. (*going R.*)

*Enter SIR PEREGRINE BEAMISH and BARRISTER from Court.*

SIR P. (*aside*) Thank Heaven, that relying on my promises, Uriah has not betrayed the reason of his crime. Well, what do you think will be the verdict ? (*to the BARRISTER*)

BARRISTER. Oh, guilty; no doubt on't. I put his case as strongly as I could; but the clear recognition of the old clerk he drugged couldn't be surmounted. We shall soon know, however—the Court is sitting, late as it is.

SIR P. And the sentence?

BARRIS. Heavy! To steal a parish register is a serious matter—aggravated, too, by his refusal to state where he had concealed it.

SIR P. (*aside*) That was to serve me. That is, of course, presuming him guilty!

BARRIS. And guilty he is. You gave him an excellent character, certainly. Do you return to Court? (SIR PEREGRINE *assents*) I'm off to dress for the bar mess, (*going, R.*)

SIR P. Yes, yes, I'll return. I'm rather interested. The truth is, Underwood is a friend—I should say an old servant, and—however, I—I'll let you know the result.

*Exit into Court—BARRISTER, R.*

*Enter MR. HOT FROST, R., runs against the BARRISTER, who accidentally knocks his hat off, then goes, L.—JENNY runs before him.*

JENNY. Oranges, sir! Fine St. Michael's—a penny each or two for three half-pence, sir!

FROST. Bother the child—get out of the way! (*lifts up his walking cane—in shrinking from the blow, JENNY upsets the oranges*) Don't you begin to cry!—don't do it. You've brought your fine London tricks here, have ye? You spill your oranges, and then lay it on to me, that I may give you money, miss—money, that you may spend it in gin miss—gin! I've a good mind to give you in charge, you little cunning, artful wretch!

JENNY. Stop, sir! I don't mind your spilling the oranges, sir—that perhaps was as much my fault as yours; but I do mind what you said just now; for though my poor aunt and I have been close on starvation these months past, we've never had one single penny, sir, that hasn't been earned with honour, and spent with prudence, (*beginning to pick them up*)

FROST. Well, no, there—hem! bother the child! what a worry children are—not that I ever had any! Perhaps I've made a mistake; I----- (*begins to help JENNY*)

JENNY. No, no, sir, thank you; I don't wish to put you out of the way at all. I'm obliged to you all the same, but I can do it myself.

FROST. Oh! hem! that's your aunt, eh? bother the children! Oh! that's your aunt? How uncommonly badly she dresses! Oh you are—hem!—I seem to remember your face.

MRS. F. I shall never forget yours, sir. I'm Jane Fryer, the

felon's wife! and you, sir, were the foreman of the jury who condemned him for forgery.

FROST. And a clearer case—

MRS. F. Could I but have spoken! But my lips were closed. Oh, laws! just laws! when a wife who might prove her husband's innocence may not go into a witness-box and swear it before the world!

FROST. I remember—I remember all about it. He laid the blame on Uriah Underwood—most respectable man; steward of Sir Peregrine Beamish. Most respectable!

MRS. F. Respectable? Uriah Underwood respectable? Ask the old clerk he drugged, and whose chance recognition in the street led to his detection. Ask the chemist who sold him the stupefying draught,—the wayfarer who saw him leave the church. On their evidence he is being tried for a common theft, and on their evidence he is found—*(voices inside the Court, as a party come out, " Guilty ! Guilty!")*—Guilty! did you say guilty ! oh ! did I hear aright—did you say guilty ?

POLICE. Guilty!

MRS. F. But the sentence—the sentence?

POLICE. Wait, and I will tell you. *(the party return into the Court)*

FROST. Well—hem!—'pon my word—I hope I haven't made a mistake. I—I must find fault with somebody. Why—why are you in this state? Why don't you work, eh? and why don't you reply to my question—why don't you work ?

MRS. F. Because I am a felon's wife. That's my answer. I am a felon's wife. Here is the heart for work—here the ready hands for labour—and I seek it—I seek it. " Are you a wife?" they ask. "Yes," I reply. "What is your husband ?" I tell them—I scorn to lie—and tell them a felon. They shake their head. "We dare not—others will not work with you; you would require so much watching." So, heartsick, they turn me from their closing door into the street, where crime ever beckons to want—as though, sir, because the husband is a felon, the wife should be a felon too.

FROST. Well, now I really begin to wish that I had not been the foreman of that jury.

MRS. F. *(to the crowd who are coming out of the Court)* The sentence—the sentence !

POLICE. Fifteen years—fifteen years ! In two minutes he'll be off to Portland; see, here's his carriage to take him to the station, *(the end of an omnibus is backed on, R. 2 E.)*

MRS. F. *(to FROST)* Do you hear that, sir? the good Uriah Underwood—the respectable Uriah Underwood, who with his own lying lips swore away my husband's, freedom, is now himself a fettered convict, and for fifteen years.

FROST. 'Pon my word I feel very uncomfortable, very. Hark ye, my good woman, tell me what now is the dearest wish of your heart ?

MRS. P. Can you ask me, sir? To see my husband once more ; not to speak to him, but even if I were hidden and afar off, only to see him.

FROST. Well, I must think, think what can be done. Here, little one, here's a shilling for you!

JENNY. No, thank ye, sir ; no, thank ye ; I won't take your shilling, sir; I haven't forgot what you said, and you might fancy, perhaps, that I was going to spend it in—in—

FROST. Gin, I suppose ? Both the women, they've both got the best of me. Well I'll buy your oranges, there, there, there—you wait till I come back ; mind what I say, both of you—you wait till I come back. *Exit into Court.*

JENNY. *(running to her aunt)* See, aunty, why, heaven ! it's a sovereign !

MRS. F. But he thought it was a shilling, Jenny, he's made a mistake—after him, after him, quick !

*(JENNY runs after FROST in the Court—the crowd are still coming out, among them SIR PEREGRINE—three or four POLICEMEN form a sort of line between the Court doors, which are half-closed, and the door of the omnibus, and pass the PRISONERS from one to the other as they come out; as FIRST PRISONER is being handed along, an old WOMAN rushes to him and embraces him; he is passed into the van. Enter SECOND PRISONER. GIRL shouts to him " Bill!" SECOND PRISONER answers, " All right, Kitty, only three years—I can knock that little lot off on my head !" Cries in the Court, " Uriah Underwood! Uriah Underwood ! see, here's Uriah," &c.)*

*Enter URIAH, guarded.*

URIAH. What if there is Uriah, eh ? what if there is ? What is there in a man having just fifteen years knocked out of his life, eh ? that he should be stared at and made a show of? Wait a minute—Sir Peregrine, I don't see Sir Peregrine. Jane Fryer! *(MRS. FRYER is R., when URIAH sees her, he makes an impulsive start from her towards c. of stage, the OFFICERS follow him.)*

MRS. F. Yes, Uriah, the wife of the man who was the victim of your cunning plot—your deep-wrought, wicked lie !

URIAH. *(struggling with the OFFICERS, who are gradually forcing him back)* Don't you speak to me, don't; but, Sir Peregrine—there he is. Mind your promise, eh? if you don't, you'll be off to Portland at once—be there before me. Make it square.

SIR P. (*aside*) What can I say ? (*to the OFFICERS*) Yes, yes, he's mad with the disgrace of his conviction.

JENNY *enters from Court, and comes down, c.*

URIAH. Make it square, I say, or—look here—(*he snatches JENNY up*)—look here! You understand me, Sir Peregrine? See the child—see ! (*the OFFICERS force him back, and eventually remove JENNY, who struggles and screams, &c.*) You understand, Sir Peregrine; the child, or—there, there, I can go quiet. Fifteen years—ha, ha!—help me, or you know—you know! You're under my thumb, Sir Peregrine—under my thumb ! (*OFFICERS get him into the omnibus and drive off*)

MRS. F. And at Portland they will meet, the innocent and the guilty. (*doors of Court closed—crowd dispersed*)

*Enter Mr. FROST from Court.*

FROST. I'm going to do a foolish thing, I'm going to do a damned foolish thing; but I can't help making an ass of myself, and I suppose I must do it. Come here, Mrs. Bryer—Cryer—Dryer—Fryer—what the devil is your name ? Supposing—mind, only supposing—that that sovereign had been given you really, and not by mistake, what would you have done with it ?

JENNY (*fully, R.*) Well, sir, we shouldn't have spent it in gin.

FROST. Go away, go away, you little pussy cat—s-s-s—s-s-s. I ask you, Mrs. Bryer—Cryer—Fryer—what the devil's your name ?

MRS. F. Well, I should have gone to Weymouth, sir.

FROST. Of course; give em money, fly away to a fashionable watering-place—just like the women. How I do hate the women—I never would have anything to do with any one o' the lot, except, my mother, and I'd have done without her if I could. But why to Weymouth—why to Weymouth?

MRS. F. Partly because I have two friends there.

JENNY. Mr. and Mrs. Dyngell.

FROST. Gentry, I suppose, eh?—gentry?

JENNY. No, sir; Mr. Dyngell is only a tumbler in the street.

FROST. Regular hands, eh—vagabonds ?

JENNY. No, sir, Gregory only took to it a day or two since, and however he gets on I can't imagine.

FROST. Oh, it's partly to see them, eh ? And what's the other reason, Mrs. Bryer—Cryer—Fryer? Why the devil don't you speak ?

MRS. F. Because from the shore I can see the island where he works, the convict husband of my love!

FROST. Only to see it, eh? But you can go on the island, if you like.

MRS. P. No, sir, that is impossible.

FROST. Why the devil do you contradict me? I say you can.

MRS. F. I assure you, sir, you are mistaken.

FROST. That's as much as to say I'm a liar! I say you can.

MRS. F. Not without an order, sir, from a minister or a judge.

FROST. But 'suppose—mind, I only say suppose—what a dismal old ass I am, to be sure—suppose I had been to the judge—suppose he had heard your story—suppose he had signed the order—and suppose I was to say—there it is!

MRS. F. An order?—an order to see John?—An order?—am I dumb? Thanks should pour out like a torrent, and words fail!—all I can utter is, God bless you, sir!—God bless you! (*flinging herself at his feet*)

FROST. There, there—don't say any more. Don't cry—I hate to see women cry—don't cry, I tell ye! Damn it! ma'am, don't cry—'pon my soul, if you do, I shall blubber as well. (*crying*) Here, here, girl (*beckoning to JENNY*) What a horrid old donkey I am. Just give her that, and a five-pound note to help her on her way. And when you've been there, come back here, and I'll give you plenty of honest work. Ask for Hot Frost—that's what the blackguards call me—Hot Frost, because they say my temper's a trifle peppery! I must go—damme! I must go. I'm getting so in love with her for sticking to her husband, that if I stayed much longer I should make her commit bigamy, and marry her myself.

*Exit, L.*

(MRS. FRYER *has fallen motionless on the stage*—JENNY *goes to her and raises her partly up*—MRS. FRYER *looks vacantly around*)

JENNY. Aunty—aunty—

MRS. F. Jenny, I—I am afraid-----

JENNY. Afraid!

MRS. F. That all this is not real—that it is some pleasant dream, which will make the morning more horrible by the waking. (JENNY *holds up her aunts arms, and standing behind her, puts the five-pound note in one hand, the order in the other*—MRS. FRYER *leaps up*) No—yes—no—I can see them—read them—feel them—grasp them! It is real—it is—oh, Heaven!—it seems now worth all these mouths of sorrow to feel this flood of gladness! Oh, John—poor convict-worker in the chain—oh, that you had not suspected me—that in the true affinity of soul with soul, you might know that your wife was coming to thee—to see thy form, hear thy voice—to kiss thy lip, and to clutch to her very heartstrings her own—her darling John!

*Exit, R., followed by JENNY.*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Street in Weymouth.* PASSENGERS cross each way.

*Enter* GREGORY, with the loose coat over his acrobatic dress which was used in the First Act, and MRS. DYNGELL with a large drum, R. GREGORY has a trombone, and a box containing the conjuring apparatus.

GREG. Sally, Sally, I can't do it. I never conjured, you know, or tumbled, in my life.

MRS. D. There, that's the way with you. You are so bashful, you won't try, Now, take off that coat that I got out of pawn for you, and begin.

(GREGORY throws his cap off the stage, and takes off his coat—his fleshings are much too big for him—they hang in folds)

GREG. I say, Sally, don't my flesh look rather wrinkly? My immediate predecessor was the Australian giant. He was nine feet high, and I ain't much more than five foot nothing.

MRS. D. It shows you off, Gregory. Now begin, Gregory. Overture—overture. (GREGORY blows a discordant blast on the trombone; MRS. GREGORY clears a space with the worsted balls, and GREGORY arranges the knives, balls, &c. at the back of the scene) Now, ladies and gentlemen, the celebrated signor is about to give a lesson in the art of acrobatico-gymnastico-ground-and-lofty-tumble-up-and-downico.

GREG. Yes, signora.

MRS. D. Repeat the overture. (GREGORY blows another discordant blast)

GREG. The first part of this entertainment, ladies and gentlemen, will include experiments' of such wonderful, extraordinary, marvellous, strange, thrilling, and excruciating nature, that they have never been seen before—cannot be seen now—or ever will be seen. I am the last survivor of the celebrated band of Vesuvian brothers, who were expressly manufactured for the delight of mankind from the lava of the burning mountain! Before we commence, the lady of my love will make a trifling collection, for the sake of encouragement.

MRS. D. (*aside to him*) What! already, Gregory?

GREG. Yes, my dear; you'd better get as much as possible before we begin, because I'm sure they won't give us much when we leave off.

MRS. D. (*collecting the cash*) The first experiment will be the world-renowned amputation trick, in which the professor will cut the head off a child in the presence of the audience. Behold the professor! behold the child! and behold the instrument of decapitation!

(MRS. DYNGELL brings a BOY forward, who stands, c., and

*gets a big knife from the box behind; GREGORY attitudinizing over the CHILD, wiping the knife on its hair, &c.)*

GREG. (*aside*) How is it done? How the deuce is the trick done? I'm sure I haven't a notion! I cannot disappoint the audience. I've made up my mind to that, so I *will* cut the child's head off, if I'm hanged at the Old Bailey for it!

MRS. D. Good gracious, Gregory! what are you going to do?

GREG. I must amuse the people, and I will cut his head off.

MRS. D. (*takes the CHILD away*) The child's mother requiring her offspring, the professor is compelled to postpone the experiment for the present.

ALL. Oh!—ah!—hiss-s-s!

MRS. D. It's all part of the entertainment, (*removes CHILD*)

GREG. Oh, Sally! I am that nervous and knocked up, I must have a bit of a rest (*he looks round, jumps on the big drum, and goes through*) Sally, Sally! (*with great difficulty MRS. GREGORY extricates him*)

*Enter HOT FROST and JENNY.*

FROST. Hallo! what infernal vagabonds are these?

JENNY. Don't say that, for they have been good friends to me and my poor aunt.

FROST. Oh, are they? (*going to GREGORY*) How do you do, sir? (*shaking his hand*) I am happy and proud to see you, sir—I repeat, I am proud of you—proud of you.

MRS. D. (*to GREGORY*) Who is this gentleman?

FROST. Hot Frost—that's my name. I didn't like to let the poor women come by themselves, and so was donkey enough to bring 'em. While Mrs. Brver, Cryer, Dryer—what the devil is her name?—while she's gone to see her husband, I'm taking care o' the child. I'm a regular nursemaid, in fact—a nursemaid.

MRS. D. The next experiment will be a feat of balancing, never before attempted in this or any other country.

(*GREGORY walks round as though to make Reparations; he then tries to balance the drum on his chin—at last the drum goes over his head, which comes through at the other end*)

FROST. Bravo, bravo! that is clever—that certainly is clever!

ALL, Bravo, bravo! (*they laugh, &c.*)

GREG. This, ladies and gentlemen, concludes the first part of the entertainment, (*they applaud jokingly—GREGORY bows*)

MRS. D. The next will be his favourite experiment with the serial ball. He will throw the ball several thousand miles further than the nearest fixed star, and catch it in this minute

receptacle on his forehead, (*she comes forward to fix the cup on forehead.*)

GREG. Oh, Sally ! how can you tell such a whopper ?  
(*GREGORY takes a position, &c, before he throws up the ball, at last he does it. throws it up, and it is supposed to descend on his eye, and knock him down*) O—h—h !

FROST. Bravo ! now that is clever !

MRS. D. (*running to him*) Gregory! Gregory!

GREG. Oh—oh! Sally!

MRS. D. Oh, Gregory! have you spoilt your beauty, Gregory, my darling?

GREG. How—how much money have you taken, Mrs. Gregory ?

MRS. D. Fivepence halfpenny.

GREG. Run off to the butcher's as hard as you can pelt, and get half a pound of tender steak.

MRS. D. What! dinner already?

GREG. Dinner ! I shall never want any dinner again :—to put on my eye, Sally—to put on my eye, else it will be in very deep mourning to-morrow.

VOICES. The Mayor!

(*they take off their fiats as the MAYOR, a corpulent party enters, R.*)

MAYOR. Hullo! what's this disturbance, eh ?

MRS. D. Oh, sir! if you please, sir-----

MAYOR. Silence, woman !

GREG. (*starting up and seizing the worsted balls*) Woman! what, call my wife a woman ? you insulting old bow-windowed blackguard, take that, (*holding one of the balls in his hands, flings the other full against the MAYOR'S stomach*)

ALL. Police, police!

MRS. D. Oh, Gregory, Gregory, you've gone and hit the Mayor in the corporation.

GREG. Now, Sally, I'm off. (*just as he reaches the wing a POLICEMAN meets him, L., brings him down, c.*)

MAYOR. To the station—away with him.

FROST. I'll bail him, hanged if I don't.

MAYOR. What for, sir ? Why bail him out, sir ?

FROST. What for, sir ? Why do you bale any thing out, sir? just to keep it afloat—that's all, sir.

MRS. D. Let him go, let him go, or I'll scratch your eyes out.

MAYOR. Now then, off with him.

MRS. D. (*seizing the worsted balls and swinging them on the Policeman's hat, &c.*) Let him go! (*with cries from GREGORY, " Don't choke me !" From the PEOPLE, " Off with him !" The party exeunt, L.*)

(*all together*)

SCENE THIRD.—*The Convict Settlement at Portland. Entrances at various parts of the stage—a tall cliff overhanging the sea, rising from the stage at back.*

*Various parties of CONVICTS discovered at work, OVERSEERS, &c.—JOHN FRYER, with his back to audience, at work, c.—he has a number of good-conduct marks—dinner bell rings—gradually the CONVICTS are made up in companies, and marched off to dinner—one of the CONVICTS brings JOHN FRYER'S dinner to him. COLONEL ALFORD, the governor, enters with SIR PEREGRINE, R.—Music.*

COL. A. Yes, I remember the name. He was specially sent down to me this morning, but I have not as yet seen him. You say-----

SIR P. That I am very much interested in him, and if, without violating the rules-----

COL. A. Well, Sir Peregrine, though we may be unable to break them, we can at least temper their severity. We were old college chums, and I am anxious to oblige you; here's a company of fresh arrivals, point the man out to me.

(a COMPANY crosses the stage, headed by FALKNER, R. 2 E.,  
URIAH UNDERWOOD, handcuffed, in convict's dress, is the last)

COL. A. Stay, Falkner, who is the last of the company ?

FALKNER. New arrival, sir. (*taking out list, and looking at it*)  
Uriah Underwood.

(a glance of recognition between URIAH and SIR PEREGRINE)

COL. A. What is this ?

FALK. It's an extra company, sir ; taking 'em down to the bay.

COL. A. But this last arrival, you have handcuffed him.

FALK. I was obliged to, sir; he stormed awful. You see, sir—(*touching his hat and taking the GOVERNOR into R. C., so that the others cannot hear*)—he was so very cantankerous, that as I was all alone with this company between the prison and the bay, I thought it best to put the darbies on; rest 'o the people are at dinner, you know, sir.

COL. A. Has the doctor seen him ?

FALK. Yes, sir, and reports him strong for labour.

COL. A. Reports him strong, eh ? well, to me he looks rather sickly.

FALK. All right, (*aside*) Kissing goes by favour, (*aloud*) Well, sir, now I look at him again he does look rather weakly, don't he, sir ?

COL. A. I think you may—you understand—and he can work here with Silent Jack.

FALK. (*aside*) As for Jack, he's as good as any warder,

that's right enough; but as for the darbies—well, I suppose I must, but one's sufficient, t'other, I fancy, will be wanted in a hurry.

*(releases one of the handcuffs—COLONEL ALFORD goes to explain in pantomime to JOHN FRYER)*

SIR P. *(aside to URIAH)* Are you mad ? remember, on your perfect obedience depends the success of my exertions to fulfil my promise.

URIAH. A ticket-of-leave and a fortune. Should you forget I should remind you.

COL. A. *(coming down)* You'll take a look round the island and some lunch before you go.

SIR P. Shall be delighted.

FALK. Then I'm to leave him, I suppose, sir ?

SIR P. I'll answer for him ; quiet as a child, *(to COLONEL A.)*

FALK. *(aside)* Don't believe a word of it. Well, if he's as quiet as Silent Jack, he'll do. Come, men.

*(the COMPANY go off, R. SIR PEREGRINE and COLONEL ALFORD exit, L.—Music)*

URIAH. *(leaning on his pick)* So, this is my wretched fate ; all the gift of intellect, all the blessing of education, and it has brought me to this, the dress of a convict. Well! now to work with my mate, *(goes up)* John Fryer !

JOHN. Uriah Underwood!

*(JOHN leaps out of the hole he has been quarrying, and rushes at URIAH—URIAH runs from him and crouches down R. c.—JOHN holds his pick over him as though about to strike—Picture)*

URIAH. John, I-----

JOHN. No, no, don't even whisper, or my pick will crash into your brain. I am not myself—for twelve bitter months, though my lips have never been opened, my heart has been brooding over the bitter wrong you've wrought-----

URIAH. John, I-----

JOHN. *(raising the pick)* Ah-h! no, no, let it go *(flinging it away)*, let it go, I would not have murder on my soul.

*(taking stage, L.)*

URIAH. John, I had forgotten that-----

JOHN. Oh, he's forgotten! He robs me of the happiness of a home, brings disgrace upon my name; and it's such an every-day sort of thing with him that he's forgotten. But justice, thank heaven, has a better memory; your reward, the convict's chain at last. I ask not for what crime you are here, you are equal to the worst. Enough, you are here, Uriah Underwood, *(going up stage, L.)*

URIAH. Come let us work !

JOHN, Work! what, with you ? Breathe the air you poison—tread the very clods that you disgrace ? Never, Uriah Underwood ! by the heaven that made me, never!

URIAH. Oh, how I hate him !

JOHN. Ha, ha, ha! I can't but laugh, to think how all your fine, deep cunning has served to furnish you with no finer lodgings than Portland Prison ! And you think yourself so deep. But you shan't cheat 'em here! The parson believes in me, and I'll tell him the false wretch you are.

URIAH. Curse him!—and my ticket—

JOHN. If words of truth can do it, that ticket you shall never have I hate you !

URIAH. Curse on your soul, proud wretch! (*dashes at him and struggle*)

*Enter FALKNER, R.*

FALK. Ah, ha! I thought I should be wanted! Stick to him, Silent Jack, (*going up to them*) He's as strong as a horse ! Here ! Lucky one of the darbies was on him ! There you are (*locking them together*) now he can't run away. I knew how it would be; but I'll have the picket round in a brace of shakes.

*(rung out and whistles—whistle repeated—alarm bell, &c, getting louder and louder)*

URIAH. Oh, you're my gaoler, are you! Now listen to my revenge. You have been deceived by your jealous doubts. The letter which, written by me, so maddened you, was addressed to Jenny. It was Jenny who met me at the Black Tarn. It was your wife who, following her, preserved her life.

JOHN. Why was she silent then when I taxed her in the cottage ?

URIAH. Because—think on it, sleep on it, that the thought may poison both night and day—I swore that if she breathed one word that could touch me, that I would betray you to the garb which now we wear. It was to save you that she spared me; it was to preserve your honoured name that she left her home, to starve in the London streets.

JOHN. Great Heaven ; and shall this man live ?

*(JOHN swings URIAH round, and drags him towards the bottom of the steep)*

URIAH. Whither would you drag me ?

JOHN. From rock to rock up the steep, and plunge you, coward, into the sea!

URIAH. Mercy !

JOHN. What mercy had you for me ? You know I refused the accursed task! You forged the tale that condemned me!

URIAH. Spare me!

JOHN. I swear I don't even see you; I remember only the happy home which you made desolate.

*Enter FALKNER, WARDERS, CONVICTS, &c. from all parts.*

FALK. (*below*) See ! Help ! Jack, why what ails you ? Are you mad ?

JOHN. (*above*) Mad is the very word ! Mad !

FALKNER, WARDERS, &c, *begin to ascend the rocks in pursuit.*

URIAH. Spare me—spare yourself!

JOHN. Death for both of us—death!

URIAH. Let me live; I can restore fortune for your niece, I can-----

JOHN. Liar that you are, I believe you not ! Death for both of us—death !

*(by this time JOHN and URIAH have gained the summit of the cliff. The CONVICTS, WARDERS, &c, who have tried to cut him off, are close upon them. JOHN lifts URIAH up, as though to dash him into the sea below. General confusion)*

*Enter SIR PEREGRINE and COLONEL ALFORD, L.*

MRS. F. (*without, loudly, R. 1 E.*) John!

JOHN. (*stopping*) Is it a voice from Heaven ?

MRS. F. (*entering*) John, husband, it is your wife !

*(FALKNER, who has gained the summit, has unlocked the handcuffs)*

SIR P. Secure him !

*(they attempt to do so—JOHN dashes them away, and leaping from rock to rock, reaches the stage, c. During his descent interjectional explanation)*

JOHN. Back! Would you keep me from a wife, and such a wife? Jane, my darling, innocent Jane, where are you?

MRS. F. Here, here, my husband, here, upon your heart! *(rushing to him and embracing, &c. Picture)*

COL. A. (C.) The would-be murderer! away with him to irons at the dark cell.

JOHN. (*turning*) For—for a moment ; I pray but a moment. I have not seen her for so many weary months. Oh ! the pale, pale face—oh! the thin and wretched rags. Jane, Jane, that by any unworthy suspicion I should have wronged such a wife as you.

MRS. F. Round your neck I weave my arms, husband, dear and true ! *(clinging to him)*

COL. A. To the dark cell, *(the WARDERS approach to separate them)*

JOHN. I never may see thee again, Jane, my wife, my

darling ! (*the WARDERS separate them—MRS. FRYER faints—another party take JOHN towards L.*) Let the last words be of forgiveness. Say that you forgive me. Speak, or I shall go mad ! (*struggling—JOHN borne away towards L.—MRS. FRYER towards R.*)

*Enter FROST, R., with the coat used in Prologue.*

FROST. Stop, everybody! Don't touch him—don't touch anybody; if you do—I'll "have the whole lot of you up before the Lord Mayor.

COL. A. May I enquire your name, sir ?

FROST. My name's Frost, sir. Don't you see the devil of a perspiration I'm in?

COL. A. But really, sir-----

FROST. Don't interrupt me, sir. You must not interrupt me, sir. My steam's up, sir! I'm working at high pressure, sir, and if I'm interrupted I shall burst. This is it, sir! (*holding out the coat*)

COL. A. Only a coat.

FROST. Oh, that's your opinion, eh?—only a coat! Come in, Mrs. Dyngell. I'd have brought Dyngell himself, if I could, but they wouldn't take my bail.

*Enter MRS. DYNGELL with JENNY, who goes to MRS. FRYER, R.*

FROST. Now, Mrs. Dyngell, ma'am, tell us all you know; tell the truth, ma'am. It isn't convenient to swear you, but My damn it, or something, just to give it a flavour.

MRS. D. Well, then, on the night when Jane's sister died I was there. John was there too, and sent me with a note to the gentleman who employed him on the plate. Soon after, the gentleman bursts into the room where we were. In leaving as quickly as he came, he left that coat in my hands.

COL. A. At best, that's but a poor excuse. Where has the coat been all these years ?

FROST. Up the spout. That lady pawned it the very next morning, paid the interest regular, and only took it out the day before yesterday.

MRS. G. That's true, sir. My pawnbroker will swear that, sir; my pawnbroker, or any other of my tradespeople, will swear anything for me.

COL. A. A tale so idle—only a coat—what can there be in that?

FROST. (*coming forward*) That's perhaps what they said at the police-station, where they searched Gregory, and found in the pocket only a bit o' paper; and on that bit o' paper, sir, there was only a bit o' writing, sir. But that writing is in

John Fryer's own hand, refusing the very crime for which he was convicted. So John Fryer can be shewn to be an innocent man, sir; and the two things which have done all this are only a coat, and only a piece o' paper.

COL. A. (*taking the paper*) This will demand closer investigation. But the writing on the other side—the writing that urges the completion of the work—the man who penned that is the really guilty. What is his name ?

JOHN. There is but one person here who can tell us that.

COL. A. And he?

JOHN. Is Uriah Underwood !

(*the PEOPLE divide, C, and discover URIAH seated on a stone, his head buried in his hands*)

URIAH. But Uriah will never speak. You may scourge him—you may torture, but Uriah will never speak.

(*MRS. FRYER advances c, waves the PEOPLE away, and slowly advances towards him, and sits at his feet*)

MRS. F. Yes, Uriah will speak for me !

URIAH. I don't know, Mrs. Fryer, whether mine is the pride which is above or beneath humanity, but Uriah will never speak.

SIR P. Then I am safe!

MRS. F. Do you remember telling me, Uriah-----

URIAH. (*softening*) Uriah.

MRS. F. That there was one passion which you felt—I remember your precise words—one passion which made you common with your kind.

URIAH. I remember, yes. (*coming, c.*) It was my love for you, Jane. No more!

MRS. F. (*following*) You've wrought me grievous wrong; but tell me—for the sake of her you loved—tell me the name of him who traced these lines.

URIAH. Had you spoken in such softening tones in the by-gone days, I hadn't been as now I am. (*goes to a WARDER, and whispers—aside*) After all, he did turn me out like a dog. Jenny! you *shall* know your father's name. (*JENNY timidly approaches L. to JENNY*) Your hand. (*to MRS. F.*) Yours. I was a witness, and can prove by the leaf of the register—which I stole, and have concealed—that your dead father was the elder brother of a certain baronet; and that the lands he should have inherited will descend to you. Hush ! hush!

JENNY But his name-----

URIAH. The name is the name of him who traced these lines. He who robbed the niece was he who also wronged the aunt—the name is that of Sir Peregrine Beamish—once my master—there he stands. (*bringing them up stage*)

JENNY. At last I know my father's name, (*takes stage quick, L.*)

MRS. F. Then John shall leave this place untrammelled  
*(takes stage quick, R.)*

*(the WARDERS in their seizure push the BARONET forward  
towards c.—JOHN meets him face to face, and flings his  
coat upon the ground at his feet)*

JOHN. And the Baronet shall wear the convict garb!  
*(Picture) Jane!*

MRS. F. John!

JOHN. Oh, darling! we shall be so very, very happy! A few idle forms, and I shall be free ! Perhaps Government will give me back the five thousand pounds they took from me when I was felon. Made faithful in each other's faith, content in each other's fervent love, in all the long years to come there shall not be one waking moment that John Fryer will not bless the day that united him to the Orange Girl.

SIR P. COL. A. JOHN. MRS. F. URIAH. JENNY. HOT F. MRS. D.  
R. L.

**Curtain.**